

PRE-FIGHT
PREVIEW

SPORT[®]

MARCH 1982/\$1.50

THE FIGHT HOLMES VS. COONEY



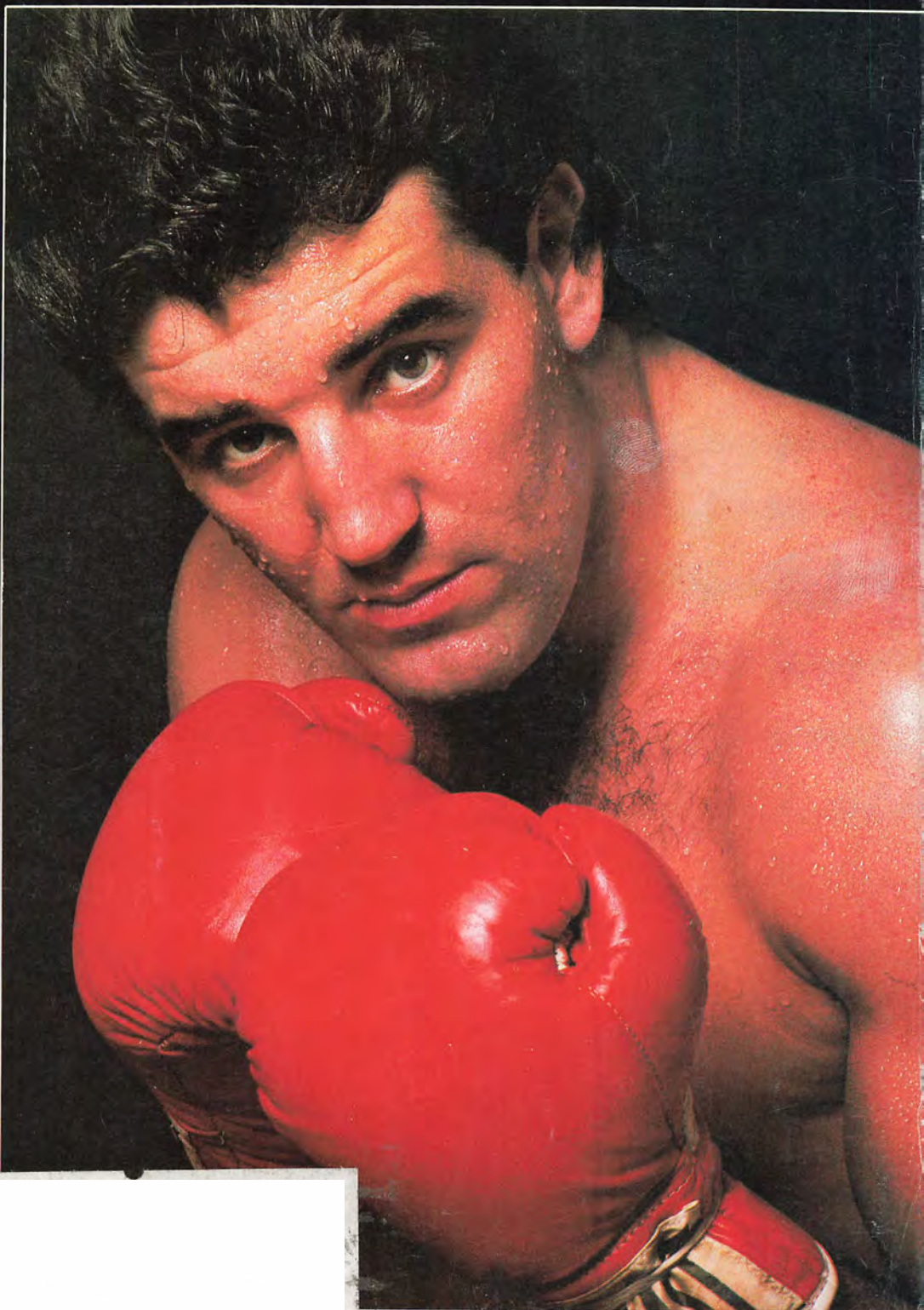
WHY WE PICK
HOLMES IN 7

PLUS

NBA's Best Rookie:
*Isiah Thomas vs.
Mark Aguirre*

**North Carolina's
Tar Heels: Can They
Win the Big One?**

**Baseball Fever in
Chicago: New Sox,
New Cubs,
New Hope**



...Cooney: The Great White Hoax?

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SPORT

MARCH 1982 VOL. 73 NO. 3 MAGAZINE

Cover Story

22 THE FIGHT: HOLMES VS. COONEY

This is it. Larry Holmes against Gerry Cooney for the heavyweight championship of the world. Two undefeated fighters. Untested challenger against unappreciated champion. Slugger versus boxer. Great white hope against proud black champion. It sounds like a classic, but it may be a quickie. We're picking Holmes by a knockout, and our prefight program tells you why. By Michael Katz



30 A TALE OF TWO ROOKIES

Isiah Thomas and Mark Aguirre first tangled on Chicago's playgrounds. Now in the NBA, they're battling it out for Rookie of the Year honors. And looking over their shoulders at a couple of guys named Kelly and Buck. By Mike Downey

34 WHY CAN'T NORTH CAROLINA WIN THE BIG ONE?

Dean Smith's Tar Heels have gone to the NCAA Final Four six times without winning a title. The finger points to defense, but this year's team may overcome the fatal flaw. By Arnold Schechter



44 THE AMERICANIZATION OF HOCKEY

A surge of U.S.-born players are suddenly making a real impact on the NHL. *Bobby Carpenter: Pride of Massachusetts.* In his first year, the 18-year-old is learning the difference between high school hockey and the NHL. *Minnesota: State of the Art.* Amid 10,000 frozen lakes covered with kids playing hockey, it's no wonder the University of Minnesota and the North Stars have become hockey powerhouses.

By Gary Ronberg and Robin Finn



52 THE BIG EAST: BASKETBALL COMES HOME

A team from the Northeast winning an NCAA basketball championship? It could happen. Powers like Georgetown, Villanova, Syracuse and St. John's are now playing in the new Big East conference and showcasing some of the best basketball in the land. By Don Markus

59 WHAT MAKES TEXAS RUN?

Texas-El Paso's Ted Banks and SMU's Ted McLaughlin have reached across the ocean to build the two best track teams in America. So where are the Americans? Try Houston. These schools could finish 1-2-3 at the NCAA championships. By Dave Rosner



68 REJOICE, CHICAGO. THE SOX LOOK GOOD

The dismal days of Chicago baseball may be over. Under energetic new owners, the Sox are making big, big changes on and off the field. And on the North Side, even the Cubs are beginning to stir. By Steve Fiffer



14 INTERVIEW: WORLD B. FREE

Lloyd Free is World B. Free now, as in All-World, and the former wild man of the NBA has become the leader of the former rejects who make up the surprising Golden State Warriors. By Barry Bloom

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LETTERS

Down on Upshaw

I am writing to express my disgust with Gene Upshaw and his views (Interview, January). Upshaw compares football salaries with those of basketball and baseball, but fails to mention the financial woes of some NBA clubs and the fact that the public by and large was on the owners' side in last year's baseball strike. Nobody is forcing Gene Upshaw to play football; if he doesn't like the pay, he can make a living some other way.

Jim Phillips
Orlando, Florida

After reading your interview with Gene Upshaw I retreated to my calculator and found that football players earn an average of approximately \$5,000 per game, while basketball players earn only \$2,300; hockey players only \$1,350; and baseball players \$900. Further reflection suggests football players receive more intangible benefits than their counterparts in other sports, as, for example, they are required to spend few more than 16 nights a season on the road. Although they might be paid less per year on the average than other sports professionals, it would appear they are much better compensated.

Ben Philpott
Lexington, North Carolina

I enjoyed your interview with Gene Upshaw, although I must admit I found him a typical example of a person suffering from the "me" syndrome. I disagree that the players are the most important aspect of the game—the fans are. We pay their salary. We buy the tickets. I would ask that the players give the fans a break, and not show their greed by striking. Nobody wins in a strike.

R. Davis
Knoxville, Tennessee

Bowled Over

Three cheers for Vin Gilligan on his Sport Talk item ("No More Lady Bowler Jokes," January) about female professional bowlers. He hit the nail right on the head when he said women pro bowlers of today are not only attractive, but excellent athletes as well. If any of your readers haven't seen the pro women bowlers in action recently, they should take the opportunity when there are tournaments in their area.

Art Serbo
Addison, Illinois

A Wise Choice

I congratulate you on your selection of Kansas State University among your Top 20 college basketball teams ("College Basketball Preview," December). It's hard to understand how so many other publications could have omitted one of last year's Final Eight NCAA participants: a 24-9 squad that has four starters, its entire bench plus Jack Hartman returning. This year Kansas State will make its 16th NCAA appearance; only three teams in the country have more NCAA appearances. Thank you for your wise choice. They'll not let you down.

F. Edward Gwin
Leoti, Kansas

Raising the Cup

Thank you for the article on World Cup skiing and Phil Mahre ("King of the Hill," December). It has given World Cup skiing some credit as a competitive, dangerous and grueling sport.

Gary Way
Bay Village, Ohio

Blues Virtuoso

I want to thank you for your excellent article on Mike Liut ("Cure for the Blues," January). Your writer brought up an important factor of goaltending that many hockey fans do not notice. I am talking about the goalie being able to organize the five men playing in front of him. When a goalie like Liut has the ability to do this, his team will be able to play consistent hockey. Watch out for the Blues.

John W. Donald
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Opening an Old Wound

It was interesting and amusing to read the negative comments by Big Ten fans to Mike Downey's article ("The Decline and Fall of the Big Ten," November). Several of his critics were proud to note that at least two Big Ten teams were ranked among the Top 20. It used to be the Top 10. Can it be that Mr. Downey's critics subconsciously agree with him?

William Singleman
Newburgh, New York

Giant Complaint

Don't hand me that franchise ownership humbug. Why doesn't the home field territory take claim to the team that plays

on it? Every time I turn on my television to watch my favorite team, I hear, Live from East Rutherford, New Jersey, it's the *New York Giants* vs. whoever. No matter how badly they're playing, it's the fans from New Jersey who are packing the stadium each week to root for their beloved Giants. What satisfaction it would be for the fans to get the credit they deserve, to hear that their New Jersey Giants were playing football.

Michael Helmer
West Keansburg, New Jersey

Mad About Moses

In reference to your article on Moses Malone ("Wholly Moses," January), there can be no doubt that he is the best rebounder and even the best all-around player ever to play the game. I think we also have to keep in mind that Moses came to the NBA straight out of high school and never had the experience of playing in college, as so many other players in the Association did. I don't think there should be any question about who's the best in the NBA.

John Blose
Wesleyville, Pennsylvania

Golden Retriever

Thanks for recognizing Larry Smith of the Golden State Warriors as one of the best rebounders in the NBA ("Boarding School," January). It's surprising to me that a player in his first year of pro basketball can get an amazing 994 rebounds, third highest in the league, and not get the respect he deserves. With your article, Larry Smith is finally getting the attention that is rightfully his.

Scott Peters
Lodi, California

Savoring Stabler

Regarding your article, "Super Heroes of the Super Bowl" (January), I feel you made a grave mistake in your quarterback selection. You named Terry Bradshaw, Roger Staubach and Bob Griese, but you failed to mention probably the greatest quarterback ever, Ken Stabler. Maybe Kenny has hung on too long, but let me remind you that your top quarterback, Joe Namath, although one of the greatest, ended up on a bench in Los Angeles. Kenny is still starting with the Houston Oilers.

Kevin P. Moore
Rochester, New York



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SPORT TALK

From the benches, bars and backrooms of sports.

And the Next Commissioner of Baseball Is...



Would you buy a used team from these men?

Bowie K. Kuhn is on the way out. Despite denials from the baseball commissioner's office, there is a growing movement underway among the 26 team owners to replace the strike-tarnished Kuhn before his term expires in August of next year.

The guessing game over who Kuhn's successor will be has begun. Here are the names and status of the people most often mentioned:

John McHale, president, Montreal Expos. He was up for the job before Kuhn was hired, but turned it down to focus on the Expos.

Tal Smith, baseball consultant. He has 23 years of front office experience, and now his firm handles over half of all the salary arbitration cases in the game. Many think this 48-year-old has the best mind in all of baseball.

Ruly Carpenter, scout, Philadelphia Phillies. The former owner loves the game all right, but he may have alienated too

many current owners with his attacks on free agent spending. **Marvin Miller**, executive director, Major League Baseball Players Association. Don't laugh, he's been in baseball since 1967 and knows how it works as well as anyone. He's fought against the owners long enough, why not enlist him to revive the ailing game?

Brendan Byrne, former governor of New Jersey. His name's been mentioned ever since he appointed the Astros' boss John McMullen as a Port Authority commissioner. Public posturing for the job might have hurt his chances.

Jim Thompson, governor of Illinois. He's a dynamic leader, for sure. The problem is that success with the electorate has this avid Cubs fan thinking about higher office.

A. Bartlett Giamatti, president, Yale University. A life-long Red Sox fan, Giamatti has been outspoken in his criticism of the strike and the general exploitation of major league baseball.

Richard M. Nixon, former president of the United States. Not many people know that Nixon was offered the job before General William Eckert took it in 1965. An avid fan with a "colorful" past, Nixon is bound to attract attention to the game. Maybe he'd even bring his tape recorder.

No Triskaidekaphobia for Moses



No fear of flying either.

Thirteen is a lucky number for hurdler Edwin Moses. Moses has been running intermediate hurdles for 13 years. He holds the top 13 times ever run in the event. And how did Moses set those 13 best times? By his unusual method of taking exactly 13 strides between each hurdle, of course. But Moses is not superstitious about his lucky No. 13. This year he is switching to the more conventional 12 strides between hurdles. "And with some luck," Moses says, "I'll set 13 new records."

Lists

Jerry West's All-Clutch Team



Time and again during his 14-year NBA career, Jerry West earned his nickname, "Mr. Clutch," when the game was on the line. So we asked West, now working for the L.A. Lakers, to name his all-clutch team, past and present.

	Past	Present
Center	Bill Russell	Kareem Abdul-Jabbar
Forward	Bob Pettit	Larry Bird
Forward	Elgin Baylor	Julius Erving
Guard	Sam Jones	Dennis Johnson
Guard	John Havlicek	George Gervin

If You're Going to Go, Take Somebody with You

Leave it to the Oakland Raiders to find their own way to finish on top in a losing (7-9) season. In the 1981 campaign, the Pride and Poise Boys easily led the NFL in destruction of opposing quarterbacks. Detroit's Gary Danielson (broken wrist), Pitts-

burgh's Terry Bradshaw (broken hand), Seattle's Jim Zorn (broken ankle) and Minnesota's Steve Dils (severe shoulder injury requiring surgery) all suffered their season-ending injuries against the Raiders.

Scouting Report

Heir to the Triple Crown

When a thoroughbred race horse draws his first breath, he is a 1,000 to 1 shot to get to the Kentucky Derby, much less win it. But the odds have improved in 1982 for a playful thoroughbred named D'Accord.

D'Accord is the son of Secretariat, who rewrote racing history in winning the 1973 Triple Crown. And D'Accord's grandsire on his mother's side is Northern Dancer, the 1964 Derby and Preakness champ and the most expensive stallion of all time (\$225,000 a performance). D'Accord combines the best attributes of his big, handsome father with the power plant of his smallish grandpa.

People regularly blow the grocery money on well-bred, good-looking horses. But D'Accord has done almost nothing wrong so far, easily winning three of his four races as a two-year-old.

In experience and accomplishment, D'Accord ranked well behind the two-year-old champion Deputy Minister and runnerup Timely Writer as the 1982 campaign began. The same could have been said of Lets Dont Fight, the year's big money winner, until D'Accord gave him a fearsome whipping in October.

With a light schedule this spring, D'Accord might not meet all his main rivals—Deputy Minister, Timely Writer, the California hope, Stalwart, New York's Star Gallant, or Calumet filly Before Dawn—until the first Saturday in May. And then, at Churchill Downs, D'Accord may meet—and beat—them all.

Bet the house. This kid's got the looks, the folks and the speed.



No. 44: Call him Mister Clutch.

SPORT TALK

From the benches, bars and backrooms of sports.

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Stats

Finding the Best All-Around Players in Basketball

Harvey Pollack of the Philadelphia 76ers has come up with a statistic that "shows you the great all-around players and super performances." He calls it the Triple Double: when a player hits double figures in points, rebounds and assists in a single game. This little maneuver is as rare as it is difficult. Last season there were only 21 Triple Doubles pulled off by seven players in all 943 NBA games.

TRIPLE DOUBLES (1980-81)

Player	Team	Games
Magic Johnson	Lakers	6
Larry Bird	Celtics	5
Michael Ray Richardson	Knicks	4
Sam Lacey	Kings	3
Marques Johnson	Bucks	1
Mickey Johnson	Bucks	1
Purvis Short	Warriors	1

There were 11 of these three-way efforts in the first 335 games of this season. Magic led again with eight, Richardson had two triples and Gus Williams did it one time though he's only 6 feet 3.

Don't forget the Double Doubles: either 10 or more points and rebounds or 10 or more points and assists in one game. Moses Malone owns the first category.

DOUBLE DOUBLES (October '81 to January '82)

Player	Team	Games	Games Played
Moses Malone	Rockets	26	29
Jack Sikma	Sonics	21	28
Mychal Thompson	Trailblazers	19	26
Buck Williams	Nets	18	30
Larry Bird	Celtics	15	29
Robert Parish	Celtics	15	29

As for points and assists, Norm Nixon, the Lakers' other guard, Johnny Moore, the Spurs' other guard, and Brad Davis of the Dallas Mavericks were all tied going into 1982 with eight Double Doubles apiece.

More Interleague Deals Cooking on Baseball's Hot Stove

Baseball executives are still shaking their heads about the scarcity of dealing at December's winter meetings. But expect some blockbusters now that the interleague trading period opened again on February 15 for six weeks.

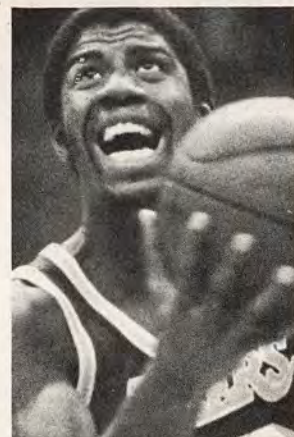
The drums suggest the Reds are listening to offers for George Foster. The New York Mets can offer Foster the money, and, more important, the exposure he craves.

Relief pitcher Neil Allen could go to Cincinnati with catcher Alex Trevino for Foster. Or newly acquired fireman Jim Kern, swapped for Doug Flynn, could go to Pittsburgh. The Pirates would love to slap Dave Parker on New York, perhaps the only city in America literally big enough for him.

Meanwhile, with the addition of Flynn, the Rangers

have eight second basemen and shortstops. Free-agent-to-be Bump Wills can be had for an outfielder, any outfielder.

The most sought-after properties this month are young pitchers who currently work for miserable teams—Seattle's Floyd Banister and Toronto's Dave Stieb. Others on the move include Minnesota catcher Butch Wynegar to Los Angeles and shortstop Roy Smalley to California or Oakland. L.A. would love to dump Ken Landreaux. Baltimore's Doug DeCinces, Cleveland's Andre Thornton, San Francisco's Enos Cabell, California's Butch Hobson, and Detroit's Richie Hebner, Al Cowens and Aurelio Lopez should not under any circumstances sign long-term apartment leases.



Three for the money: Magic



... and Larry Bird.

Rozelle-Davis Case: A Solution?

The second trial of the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum and the Oakland Raiders versus the NFL is scheduled to begin March 15. And with the personality conflict of Al Davis and Pete Rozelle becoming bigger than the issues, there's no simple solution in sight.

However, one possible outcome has come to the fore: an out-of-court settlement that would result in a Davis-less expansion franchise for L.A. In a recent vote, three of nine Coliseum commissioners went on record as favoring such a solution; even though the NFL has not yet made an offer. With the enormous legal costs and without a team to provide revenues, the Coliseum is sinking into a deep hole. Sentiments may change.

The Calendar Sport in March

Mid-February-

- March** Spring Training Opens
4-6 Big East Basketball Conference Championship; Hartford Civic Center, Hartford, Connecticut
5-7 ACC Tournament; Greensboro, NC
6 Flamingo Stakes; Hialeah, Florida
7 Santa Anita Handicap; Arcadia, California
12-13 NCAA Indoor Track & Field Championships; Pontiac Silverdome, Pontiac, Michigan
15 World Heavyweight Title Fight: Larry Holmes vs. Gerry Cooney; Caesars Palace, Las Vegas
18-20 NCAA Mideast Regionals: Birmingham, Alabama; NCAA West Regionals: Provo, Utah
19-21 NCAA Midwest Regionals: St. Louis, Missouri; NCAA East Regionals: Raleigh, North Carolina
27 NCAA Basketball Championship Semi-Finals; The Superdome, New Orleans, Louisiana
29 NCAA Basketball Championship Finals; The Superdome, New Orleans, Louisiana

Update

America's Next Team. Ahem.

Early last fall, nearly everybody predicted the Atlanta Falcons to win the Western Division of the NFC. In fact, friends report seeing a national magazine cover in December proclaiming the Falcons as the "Next NFL Dynasty."

Well, America's Next Team finished the 1981 season in second place in its

His game cracked with his ribs.



division with a 7-9 record, and failed to make the playoffs. "What happened?" fans asked. Yeah, a national magazine asked, What the hell happened?

A couple of key injuries, some bad luck and a few exposed weaknesses were what happened, according to Eddie LeBaron, general manager of the Falcons. Quarterback Steve Bartkowski went down hurt in the second game of the season; he came back but did not play well for the next five weeks. In game three, outside linebacker Joel Williams, the team's best pass rusher, was injured. The Falcons, who play a three-man defensive line, lost their pass rush and, consequently, lost the protection for its inexperienced secondary. Atlanta lost its next three games and five of its next seven. Five of the team's first seven losses were by a total of 12 points.

Now what? LeBaron acknowledges that the team will probably look at linebackers and down linemen in the draft, and may use a four-man line more next season. "But we don't plan to make any major changes. We just have to do a little tinkering," LeBaron says of America's Next Team. "We just have to fine-tune it."

Contributors this month are Michael Rosen, Norm Hitzges, Vin Gilligan, Steve Fiffer, Jack Mann, John Capouya, Peter Griffin and Stephen Steiner. Sport Talk is edited by Neil Cohen and designed by Mo Lebowitz.

Bear Bryant vs. the NFL



Don't mess with an angry Bear.

While the city of Birmingham campaigns for an NFL franchise sometime after the 1982 season, Alabama's most famous football personality, Paul (Bear) Bryant, is waging a one-man crusade against the pro game in his home state.

Bryant claims he is not only worried about the competition with his own University of Alabama program, but about the small fry as well. "If you have pro football here," he says, "Tuskegee, Alabama A&M, Troy, Livingston, North Alabama, Jacksonville State and all the rest of them are out of business. And then, in a five- or six-year period, Alabama and Auburn will be playing in front of 25,000."

Birmingham officials, to put it mildly, are not happy about the Bear's opposition. An NFL franchise would have an immediate \$10-15 million annual impact on the city.

Of course, certain inducements might change Bryant's mind. If he's not interested in coaching the fledgling franchise, it could always be named the Birmingham Bears.

The Battle for Chicago Gets Downright Nasty



Most Wanted: Caray, Faust.

With both the White Sox and the Cubs aggressively rebuilding under new ownerships (see p. 68), the rivalry has already produced an off-season PR war. The Cubs drew the first real blood when they stole the Sox's legendary broadcaster Harry Caray. The Sox responded by signing the big-names Don Drysdale and Ken Harrelson. But then the Sox heard that the Cubs were wooing Nancy Faust, Comiskey Park's much-loved organist. The Sox immediately signed Nancy to a lucrative long-term contract.

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SPORT INTERVIEW

WORLD B. FREE

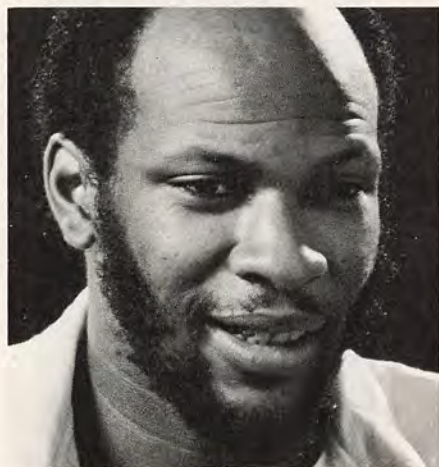
by Barry Bloom

World B. Free puts his big boat of a car (American made) into drive and whips out of the Oakland Coliseum Arena parking lot. With practice over, his day has just begun. Free turns up the music on the car stereo full blast as he speeds onto the freeway. "I hate driving out here," he says. "All this highway driving. I like the streets, man. Traffic lights, turning corners. That's the only way to get around."

Free is a creature of the streets—the New York City streets, Brooklyn specifically, Brownsville in particular. For a long time it seemed like he would be swallowed up by those streets, as some of his friends were, leaving the NBA far behind. But the man has changed.

No longer is he Lloyd Free, that wild one-on-one shooter who was bounced from Philadelphia to San Diego to the Golden State Warriors. It was with the Sixers—playing in the shadow of Julius Erving, George McGinnis and Darryl Dawkins—where Free earned the "bad rap" that he has spent much of his career trying to shake. Now he is World B. Free, the self-described consummate team player, who not only leads the Warriors in scoring but also tops the team in assists. And this former wild man has become the captain of the team.

"World" is not just a nickname, but a legal name change that happened this season. Lloyd Free is no more. World B. Free's career has just begun.



SPORT: Why did you decide to change your name from Lloyd to World?

FREE: A lot of my friends back in Brownsville always called me World. They tagged me with the name and it just stayed with me.

SPORT: Is "World" part of your image?

FREE: Yeah, sure. It's like when I go into other towns, people are always gunning for me. It's like Gun Fight at the OK Corral. The young players are always waiting for you. So you need something, like George "Iceman" Gervin—they know what to expect when he comes in. Like me, they say "World's coming" and they try to shoot me down.

SPORT: Did you think that your name change was going to be such a big deal?

FREE: I have got so much attention from



my name change that it's unbelievable. It's like it recreated me, it's turned me into a monster. I mean, just big. It's moved my stature right back up to where it used to be when I was with Philly.

SPORT: You didn't do it for publicity?

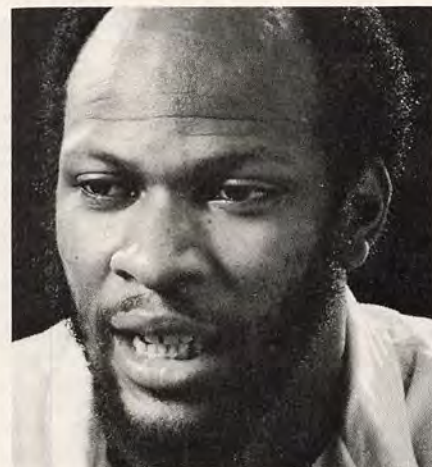
FREE: No, I did it just to do it.

SPORT: It's almost like when Lew Alcindor became Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, except you're not a Muslim.

FREE: Yes, my name is from the streets, it's not from no Muslim religion or nothing crazy like that. And that's a big difference. My last name is still Free.

SPORT: You once said you were the Rodney Dangerfield of basketball, that you didn't get any respect around the league. Do you think that's still true?

FREE: No. That was when I was starting

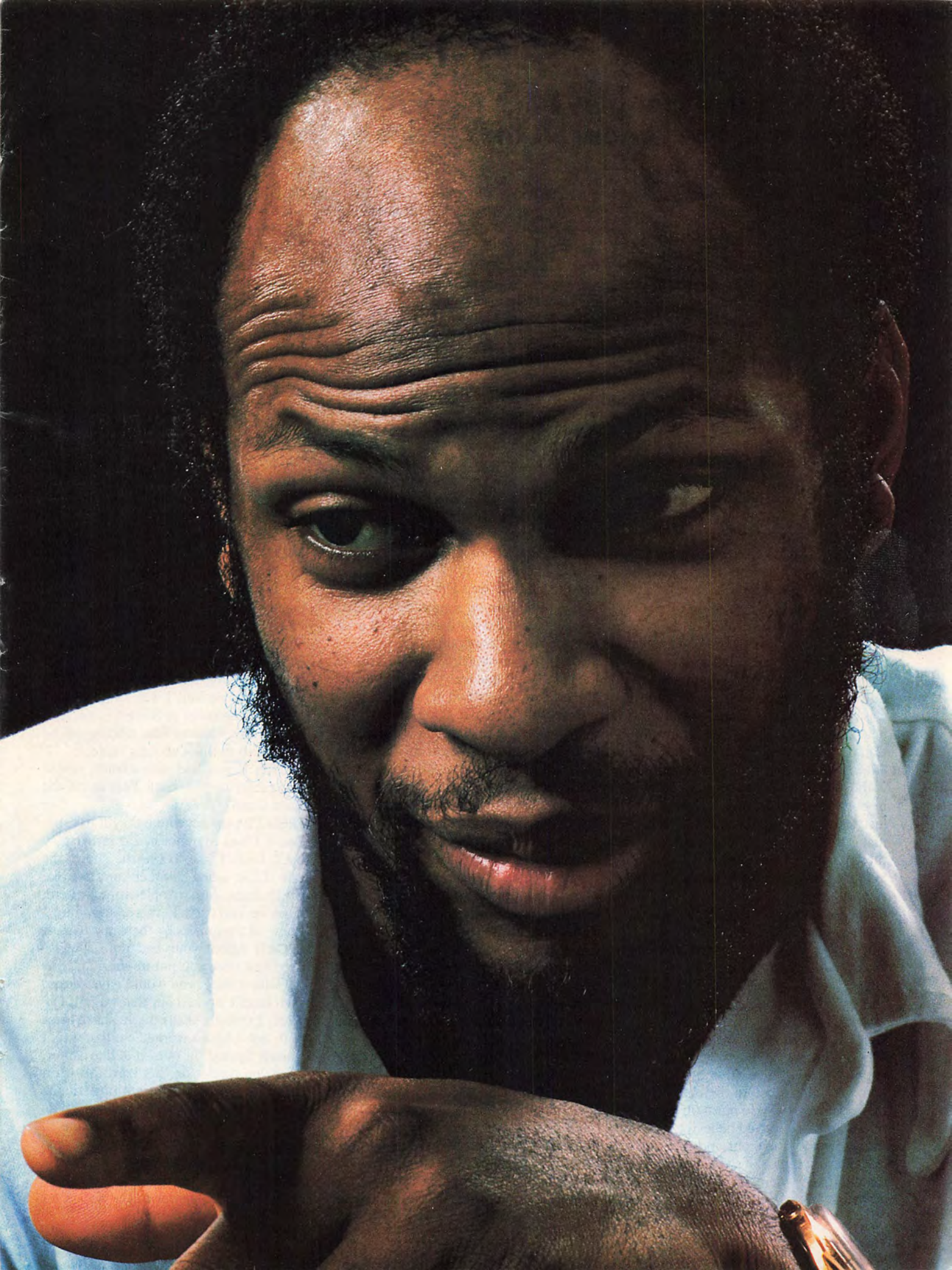


with San Diego, my first year there, and I was averaging, say, 28 points a game. And they did not pick me for the All-Star Team. And it was up to the coaches to decide whether I'd go or not. I just came from Philly and had the bad rap, and I played my heart out, *played my heart out*. And it hurt me so bad that I did not get picked. That's when I called myself Rodney Dangerfield.

SPORT: When did that change?

FREE: The middle of my second year in San Diego. The fans picked me to the All-Star Team. And I could walk around with my chest stuck out and my head held up high. Not that I wasn't doing that anyway, but it still felt real good.

SPORT: Where did you get your reputation as a one-on-one, schoolyard player?



"I'd rather play back East. They're crazy back there too, but I know all the crazies by their first names."

FREE: Started back in Brooklyn in the old neighborhood. I'd like to take it to the hole, drive in, try to dunk. I was a little guy and I liked to do all these impressive things to guys who were 6 feet 9 or 7 feet 1. I'd just take off toward the hoop and my mind would just go blank. Brooklyn players are not jump shooters. They all drive to the basket and do freaky moves. If you go to Detroit, you see jump shooters. But we penetrate the lane. We're like cab drivers out there. They try to weasel in and out of traffic and that's what we do on the court. I would've been a really good point guard because I can handle the ball well going right through traffic.

SPORT: But you chose to be a scoring guard?

FREE: If two players are walking down the street, I'm not gonna mention any names, one is a scoring guard and the other a passing guard. You know the guy with the most fame wouldn't be the passer. I just wanted to be in the category with the guy that would be known.

SPORT: Earl Monroe was a great one-on-one player when he was with the Bullets, but when he was traded to the Knicks it was easy for him to change his game and help the Knicks to a championship. Could you do something like that?

FREE: I think that's what I'm doing now with Golden State. I'm leading the team in both scoring and assists right now. I just feel like any adjustment I have to make to win, I'll do it. I want one of those championship rings.

SPORT: Has this transformation been a sudden thing?

FREE: No way. It's been something that's happened over the last four years. But no one wanted to acknowledge my passing ability.

SPORT: Let's go back to Philadelphia and the bad rap you had there. How did it start?

FREE: It started with Brent Musberger on CBS. He was getting on TV and saying things like, "Yeah, this guy Free, he puts the ball up before the national anthem even starts." He put it on people's minds and they started believing it. And then, I would come out and take some hell of a wild bunch of shots. I will admit that, but they were my shots and they looked so weird because they arced so

high up there.

SPORT: You were playing on a team of great individual talents—Julius Erving, George McGinnis, Doug Collins. Coming off the bench, did you feel you had to show what you could do in the few minutes you were on the court?

FREE: I knew I was only going to get about 10 or 11 minutes, and I knew I wanted to do 100 things in 11 minutes. So it looked like I was running crazy out there. I did look wild, I have to admit that, but I was just doing it because I knew I didn't have much time. I had to do something flashy. There's always a way to make yourself known even if you're not the star of the team.

SPORT: Do you think playing with the Sixers held you back?

FREE: No question, it held me back. If I had started with some team that had less talent, like the Nets, I wouldn't have been tagged the way I'm tagged now. I would have been on a team that needed my talent and I could have created a lot of interest for the organization.

SPORT: You were fairly comfortable as long as Gene Shue was there.

FREE: Gene understood my game, but he wanted me to move along slowly. He didn't want me to come on too fast.

SPORT: But then Shue got fired and you had Billy Cunningham. What was your relationship like with him?

FREE: At times he could be the greatest guy in the world and at times he could be a snob too. Billy just didn't like my style of game. I never thought he had any respect for me. When Gene was fired I knew I was finished there.

SPORT: Why did that happen?

FREE: He didn't want me to shoot at all. He just wanted me to pass the ball. He wanted me to sacrifice my game to make somebody else better. I was a young guy then and I said, "No way!" I figured I could get bounced right out of the league, but I took my chances.

SPORT: What do you mean by "took your chances?"

FREE: I didn't do what they wished. It was like they wanted me to get a bad rap around the league so nobody else would want me. They really messed me up, my mind and my game. The way Billy wanted me to play I would have averaged six points a game, with all the ability I have.

So I figured I'd just chuck it in Philly and try to start over somewhere else.

SPORT: You were traded to San Diego, where Gene Shue was coaching, for a 1984 draft pick. In 1977 that would mean someone in high school.

FREE: Yeah, they traded me for somebody who was wet behind the ears. I felt like they just gave me away. I just didn't want the whole thing to affect my head. I could have gone crazy over something like that. But I just figured I'd keep my composure and go out on the floor and fight.

SPORT: What did Shue tell you when you got to San Diego?

FREE: He said, "I'm gonna help you with your defense, with passing the ball. We're gonna prove to the world that you are a complete ballplayer."

SPORT: Shue was fired and Paul Silas became the Clipper coach. After you met with him, Silas told everyone you couldn't play for him. Why?

FREE: I don't know what happened. When we walked out of there, we were smiling, shaking hands. Silas came out of there saying that I really wasn't like what everyone said I was. Next thing I know, I was traded to Golden State. And here it was, me and Silas talking and he never said nothing about a trade.

SPORT: If you had your choice, would you prefer to play back East or on the West Coast?

FREE: I'll play anywhere they'll pay me. But if I had my choice, I'd rather play back East. I like to see the snow, the rain. I like when summer comes. I like the changes. Also, people are crazy here. They're crazy back there, too, but I know all the crazies by their first names.

SPORT: About your bad rap. You figured that once you put in one good year at Golden State, you would have shaken it. It hasn't worked out that way, has it?

FREE: I thought that I might shake loose of it, but it hasn't worked out that way. I finally figured it out—it's like water, once you turn it on, it's hard to turn it off. If they want to believe you're still the same person, there's nothing you can do about it. You can have a great game all night, but just make one mistake and you're right back where you were.

SPORT: Dwight Jones of the Chicago Bulls was fined earlier in the season for

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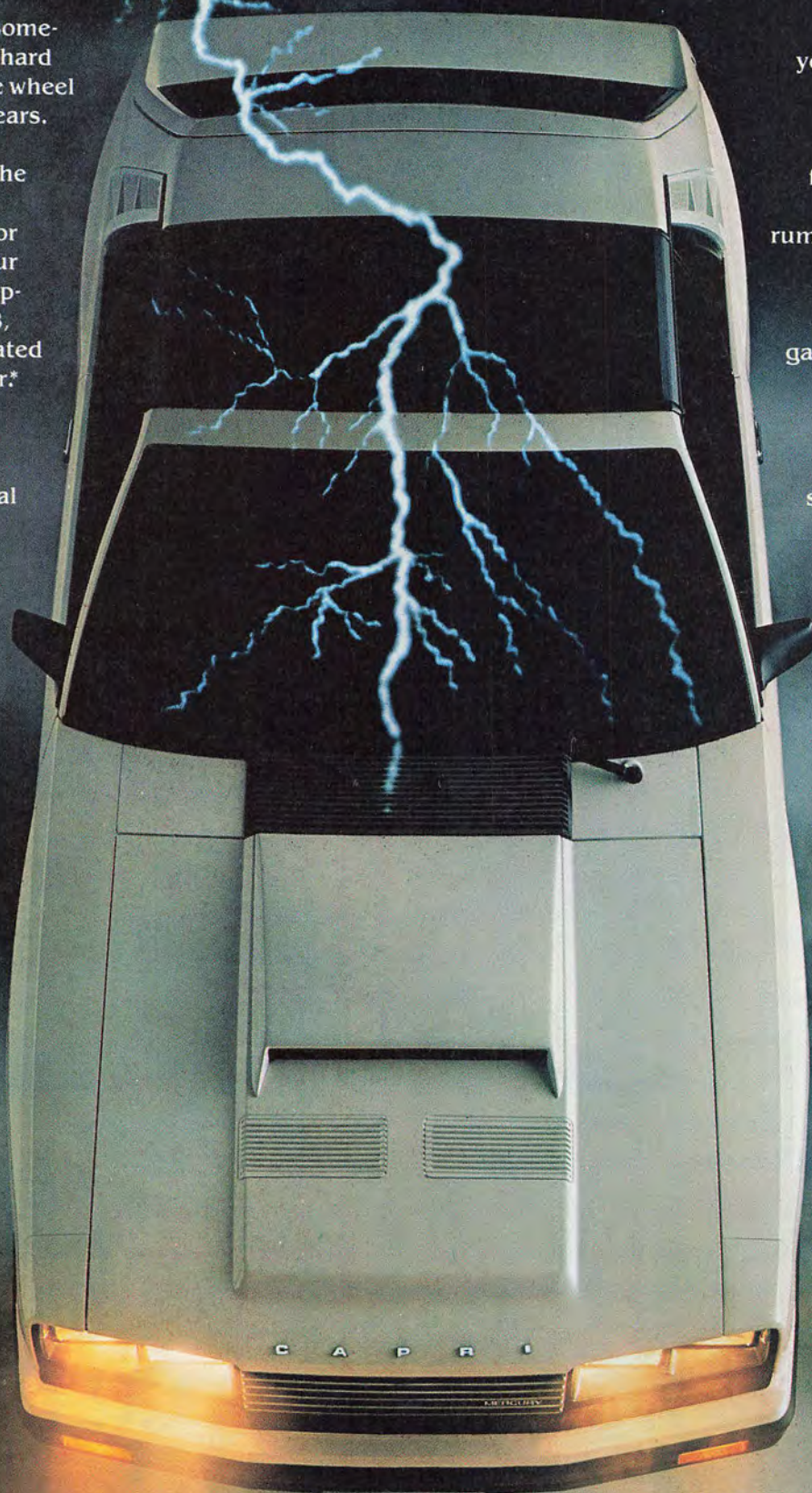
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"Come to think of it,
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"Look at Boston. They sell out because they got about seven white boys."

belting you from behind on a drive to the basket. Is that typical of the way people play you?

FREE: Yeah, I feel like they do. A lot of players, really the bigger players, they get upset with me 'cause I go to the hoop a lot and they just can't block my shot. So sometimes I make the big guys look bad, very bad. Big men hate to be embarrassed, and that's where I get most of my abuse from. But you have to drive on those guys and stand your ground. And I'll take the punishment. If I'm gonna throw it up, I know it's gonna come back. Dwight Jones though, when he did that, it was just out of pure craziness.

SPORT: Up to that point, do you think officials had been letting players get away with hitting you?

FREE: Yeah, I think they let guys rap me around a lot. It's my past reputation. And now, I'm finally coming up vocal saying, "If you're gonna play me this way, I'm gonna play you the same way." I ain't no dirty player, but if you're out to hurt me, I'm gonna hurt you right back.

SPORT: But people say basketball is a non-contact sport.

FREE: Man, this sport has more contact... we need shoulder pads out there. We need something to protect ourselves because a lot of guys are getting knocked right out of the air. I mean the guys nowadays are not even jumping anymore, they're flying.

SPORT: Lots of people say that the NBA season is too long. Do you agree?

FREE: I think the season's entirely too long. The games and them flights are just killing everybody. We had two games one time within 16 hours. I mean no sleep, no rest. You leave the gym at 11:00 P.M., got to get to the airport, got to be on a plane at 7:30 A.M., got a game at noon. I think it's ridiculous sometimes, but it's the profession we got. When people pay their money, they want to see a good show. And when you got P-R-O in front of your name, you've got to provide. Nobody's going to care if you flew from China to Mexico and back again. You better put on a good show.

SPORT: Would the Players Association permit the players to take a decrease in salary if the season is shortened?

FREE: Nope. I wouldn't. 'Cause we're

still gonna be playing a lot. And with the physical abuse we're taking—there's no way in the world I would take a decrease in my salary. I ain't making as much as a lot of guys out there anyway.

SPORT: Do you think the salaries players are being paid have hurt the league?

FREE: I think so in the sense that it brings ticket prices up. Teams don't understand that people are not gonna pay big money to see some John Doe play. You give John Doe \$80 million, but nobody wants to see him play. You have to get a big name, somebody who's gonna help you win some games, and then you can afford to spend the money.

SPORT: Philadelphia had Julius Erving and one of the best records in the league last year and they were dying at the gate. Can you explain that?

FREE: They traded George McGinnis and then they lost some other people, then they got rid of me like the following month. They said that it was only 5,000 girls that wouldn't be showing up at the gate anymore because I wasn't around. But the truth was that they had lost 5,000 of my dedicated fans.

SPORT: Are you saying that the attendance drop in Philadelphia has something to do with your being traded?

FREE: Yeah, I do believe that. I was a well-liked guy in Philly. I'd be into parties, and I'd relate to people. You know me, I don't act like I'm better than anybody else. I'm a people man, and in Philly they don't like nobody who makes you think you're better than them.

SPORT: Do you think the fact that the NBA is around 70 percent black hurts the league?

FREE: Yeah, I think it hurts a bit. I think that's why they're getting more white people, more white boys in the game. There's Danny Ainge, they gave him that big raise, bought out his baseball contract and all that. A lot of white guys are coming in, but they have to do it 'cause the league is predominantly black. That's why everyone is going to see football games.

SPORT: What do you mean?

FREE: Awww, come on man. I ain't never seen that many fans at football games back in the old days. Before, like with the New York Knicks, man, the Garden would be sold out every night.

They had about seven white boys on that team back then. You know what I mean? With Frazier, Bradley, DeBusschere...

SPORT: But Frazier is black.

FREE: Yeah, I know. But don't tell him that!

SPORT: So you think the league needs more whites?

FREE: Yeah, I think so.

SPORT: Does that bother you?

FREE: Don't bother me, man, I got my job. There's a business way about it. Look at Boston. They sell out because they got about seven white boys on that team. But they're a good team, too. That's the way you got to go 'cause the league is predominantly black. They need more white faces in the game.

SPORT: Does the black issue affect TV?

FREE: I think so. It's like this—if you was a white guy you wouldn't want to go home from a hard day's work and hear your kid say, "Daddy, when I grow up I want to be just like Darryl Dawkins." "Say what, kid? I'd rather hear you say you want to be like Larry Bird." That's why television can't put us on too much. We're bad role models.

SPORT: You're a home boy, aren't you? You go home every summer and see your family. You like walking in the streets of your old neighborhood.

FREE: I do go back to Brownsville every summer to relate to the kids, to let the kids see me. They probably never get a chance to do that with any other celebrity they'd see. I'm just showing them that if you're making a lot of money, you don't have to run away from them.

SPORT: What was it like growing up in Brownsville?

FREE: It was rough. It's one of those things that only the strong survive.

SPORT: Wasn't the basketball court you played on known as "The Hole"?

FREE: Yeah, The Hole. There were no nets, no chains, no nothing. Games there were a real experience. You had to kick the broken glass away just to play. Plenty of games broke down into knife fights, stuff like that. I tried to stay away from that. Just play basketball.

SPORT: How did you feel as you watched your schoolyard friends, like Fly Williams and Phil Sellers, drop out of pro ball?

FREE: It helped me when I seen guys like

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FREE

Fly mess up. These guys with all that talent dropping out of the league and I'd go back home and they'd still be hanging out on street corners. They could try to do it, but something about their makeup made them quit. All those guys gave me encouragement not to stop.

SPORT: Did growing up in that neighborhood have a lot to do with how you shaped your game?

FREE: Yeah, the machismo. Your survival is at stake. No matter how big the guy is in front of you, you have to take the ball to the hoop. I'll tell you, some of the games that are played in the park are better than games we play in the league. There's so much pride at stake in those games, its unbelievable.

SPORT: How were you able to stay on the good side of the streets?

FREE: Let me tell you, my father was really strict when I was young. I really wanted to be a singer. I wanted to sing with the guys who sang in the neighborhood. But I couldn't. They'd be in the park drinking wine, booze. Taking drugs. And you know, back in the old days, those drugs were stronger, too. They mix 'em with so many chemicals now. Anyway, they were only 13, 14; I couldn't indulge in any of that or my

Win

Nobody does it

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father would have killed me.

SPORT: How much drug use is there in the NBA? Is it a severe problem?

FREE: I can only speak for myself, but no, I don't think there are that many people using cocaine in the league. Just because the league is predominantly black, all of a sudden this cocaine thing started to come up. When actresses and actors in Hollywood have been doing it and are still doing it. When football, baseball and everybody else is doing it.

SPORT: But there have been problems, Eddie Johnson for one.

FREE: Right, you just said it there, man. What about when Dan Pastorini got caught holding some stuff? It was squashed in a matter of days. And who's this other guy, Stabler, with the gambling thing? Gone before you know it. But if guys in our league get stopped, then it's a three-year story.

SPORT: Are people trying to characterize the league as a big ghetto?

FREE: They may be trying to and I don't think it's helping. I think it's just another thing that turns people away from the game. It's like saying you're going out to see drug addicts play. Well, I could see drug addicts in Brownsville for free. I don't need to buy a ticket for no game to see it. I just know that the drug thing is being over publicized. Say if I were a kid, your biggest fan. And I find out that

you used drugs when I didn't have to know. I'm some snotty-nosed little kid and my idol uses it. Well, I'm gonna use it too. I'm involved with kids, I know how they think. Say I got busted for something, man, they would just die. And that's what they're doing for the images of the players. That's what they're doing to everybody.

SPORT: So drug use shouldn't be reported even if it's true?

FREE: Yeah, I don't think it should be reported. I think it should be behind closed doors. That's the way you have to do it even if you want to try and keep a dirty business clean. Just wash your hands from it. I just don't think it should have been spread around like that.

SPORT: What is your game like now with the Warriors?

FREE: I'm really like the general out there. That's why when the games are close, Al [Attles, the coach] gives me the ball. I'm not saying that our other guys couldn't do it, but Al would rather have the ball in my hands so that I can initiate something. If I'm a shooter, I'm gonna take a good shot and if I'm a passer, I'm gonna hit somebody in the right spot.

SPORT: How do you think the Warriors will finish this year?

FREE: When we get to the playoffs we're going to surprise a lot of people.

SPORT: What makes you think this team

can be a winner?

FREE: I knew last year, the minute we picked up Bernard King, that we had the potential to do some damage. He's a clutch player and I'm a clutch player. With Joe Barry Carroll coming along and with Larry Smith's rebounding, we've got a pretty good young team.

SPORT: Are you friendly with King?

FREE: Bernard is by far my best friend on the team. I remember him when he was a little kid growing up in Brooklyn. I have a lot of respect for Bernard, for what he's gone through, for the way he plays the game.

SPORT: What do you prefer more, the team game or the playground game?

FREE: It don't matter. I just like the way I'm playing right now. It's the best basketball I've played in my entire life.

SPORT: But you haven't totally sacrificed your freewheeling game.

FREE: Yeah, that's the way I am. See, when I drive to the basket I go with reckless abandon. Put my sky cap on and my goggles, that's my game. But I tell ya, I really love the game. No matter how much it takes away from people. Basketball has driven a lot of people crazy. And I just hope I'm not one of those guys who goes nuts. ★

Barry Bloom is a freelance writer based in San Francisco.

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Larry Holmes Is For Cooney It Loo



***The facts are in
and here's our pick,
Holmes in seven
(maybe six).***

by Michael Katz

The Champ has his brown leather boots up on his desk, hardly looking like a man about to embark on a "mission." He is not about to move out of this comfortable position to turn on the television set in his lavishly furnished office, not even to watch his \$10-million opponent, Gerry Cooney, make a guest appearance on the soap opera "Ryan's Hope."

"Soap opera?" says Larry Holmes, waving away all concern with the undefeated No. 1 challenger to his heavyweight boxing title. "They could put Cooney in a Superman suit, that ain't gonna help him win."

Today the Champ is confident and relaxed, at peace with himself and his corner of the world. But the week before, Holmes had sounded depressed when he talked of the fight. "It's that black-white thing," he said then. "The hate mail, the phone calls. Man, I hate it."

The black-white thing. If there's one thing poisoning the long-awaited Holmes-Cooney fight, other than that it might be a colossal mismatch, it is the black-white thing. And Holmes is not quite sure how to handle it. It's there, seeping into his soul, sometimes driving him on, giving him that extra edge of meanness boxers often need. And then it's gone and Larry Holmes is once again the small-town kid from Easton, Pennsylvania, the boy scout next door, as sweet as the framed Norman Rockwell magazine covers on his office wall.

Larry Holmes is no racist and he doesn't believe Gerry Cooney is either. Both fighters denounce the roles that

certain others would have them play: representatives of their respective races. But it's not as simple as black and white.

Holmes is the undefeated and virtually undisputed heavyweight champion of the world (even Mike Weaver, who holds the World Boxing Association version of the title, acknowledges Holmes as the true champion), and he got there the old-fashioned way. He earned it, working his way up from \$100 fights in Scranton against equally hungry young

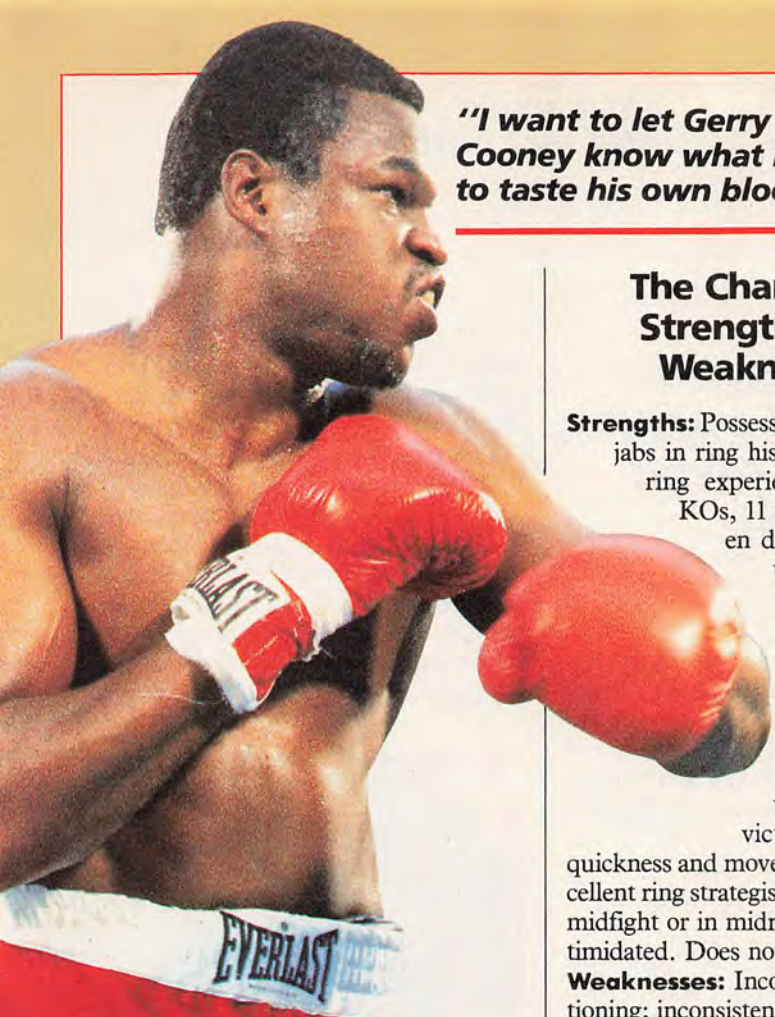


fighters. Cooney, as Holmes sees it, has been handed his position on a lily-white platter. The Great White Hype. That's what bothers the Champ. Not that Cooney is white, but that his management has cashed in on it. That's why the Champ says he'll be "on a mission" for the March 15 showdown at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

"It's what Cooney represents," says Holmes. "He represents bad. He represents evil. If Gerry Cooney wins, I think he's gonna set us back another 100 years."

"If Cooney wins, it'll mean managers, promoters and trainers will start promot-

**Larry Holmes: The jab will connect, and bring him respect.
Gerry Cooney: A great left hand, but will it land?**



"I want to let Gerry Cooney know what it's like to taste his own blood."

FIGHT P

The Champion: Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths: Possesses one of the best left jabs in ring history. Proven in-the-ring experience (39 fights, 29 KOs, 11 title defenses). Proven durability; he can go the distance. Has knockout power in any round. Excellent hand quickness. Great come-comeback capacity; has come off the canvas three times and scored KO victories. Tremendous quickness and movement in legs. An excellent ring strategist; can adjust easily in midfight or in midround. Cannot be intimidated. Does not cut.

Weaknesses: Inconsistent with conditioning; inconsistent desire from fight to fight. Has shown defensive lapses and susceptibility to the sudden knockdown punch. Age becoming a factor at 32. Pacing is sometimes irregular. Has been known to tire and expose weaknesses. Questionable power in right hand.

Tale of the Tape

Age	32
Weight	215
Height	6'3"
Reach	81"
Chest (normal)	43½"
Chest (expanded)	45½"
Biceps	15¾"
Forearm	13"
Waist	35"
Thigh	25"
Calf	16"
Neck	17½"
Wrist	8"
Fist	13½"
Ankle	10"

Holmes (39-0 29 KOs)

1973

Rodell Dupree, Scranton W 4
Art Savage, Scranton KO 3
Curtis Whitner, Scranton KO 1
Don Branch, Scranton W 6
Bob Bozic, New York W 6
Jerry Judge, Scranton W 6
Kevin Isaac, Cleveland KO 3

1974

Howard Darlington, Scranton . . . KO 4
Bob Mashburn, Scranton KO 7
Joe Hathaway, Scranton KO 1

1975

Charley Green, Cleveland KO 2
Oliver Wright, Honolulu KO 3
Robert Yarborough, Toronto KO 3
Ernie Smith, Las Vegas KO 3
Obie English, Scranton KO 7
Charlie James, Honolulu W 10
Rodney Bobick, Manila KO 6
Leon Shaw, Washington, D.C. . . . KO 1
Billy Joiner, San Juan KO 3

1976

Joe Gholston, Easton KO 8
Fred Askew, Landover KO 2
Roy Williams, Landover W 10

1977

Tom Prater, Pensacola W 8
Horace Robinson, San Juan KO 5
Young Sanford, Las Vegas KO 7
Ibar Arrington, Las Vegas KO 10

1978

Earnie Shavers, Las Vegas W 12
Ken Norton, Las Vegas W 15
Alfredo Evangelista, Las Vegas . . . KO 7

1979

Osvaldo Ocasio, Las Vegas KO 7
Mike Weaver, New York KO 12
Earnie Shavers, Las Vegas KO 11

1980

Lorenzo Zanon, Las Vegas KO 6
Leroy Jones, Las Vegas KO 8
Scott LeDoux, Bloomington KO 7
Muhammad Ali, Las Vegas KO 11

1981

Trevor Berbick, Las Vegas W 15
Leon Spinks, Detroit KO 3
Renaldo Snipes, Pittsburgh KO 11

In This Corner . . . The Holmes Team

Eddie Futch, trainer. Fought out of the Brewster Gym in Detroit where he first met lifelong friend Joe Louis. Took over training reins for Larry Holmes when Richie Giachetti was fired in April of 1981. Seventy years old. Trained Joe Frazier following Yank Durham's death. Credited for vast improvement in Holmes' right hand. Highly esteemed cutman.

Ray Arcel, trainer. Eighty-two-year-old boxing sage has trained 18 champions including Benny Leonard, Tony Zale, Barney Ross, Ezzard Charles and Roberto Duran. Worked corner opposite Joe Louis 14 times, including Charles' 1950 title win. Believes everything in boxer's arsenal begins with the jab. Master strategist. Has calming influence on his fighters.

ing white fighters and not letting 'em fight anybody. I'm on a mission. For the sport, for the game. For my people, for all people.

"That's why a lot of white people want me to win. They know what I went through and here's a guy who had all setups to get in this position. It's like you

spend 20 years in school and here's this mother who spends two years in school and gets a better job than you. That's got to mess up your mind.

"A guy beats Dino Dennis and Leroy Boone and he's ranked No. 1," says Holmes with contempt for the chronology of events that led Cooney to the top-

ranked position two and a half years ago. It bugs the entire Holmes camp.

"You got so many people struggling and this guy gets the breaks," says Luis Rodriguez, a 32-year-old former sparring partner who is now the Champ's publicist. "You got world-class fighters begging for a dollar and this guy has al-

ROGRAM

"I never make predictions. All I know is that I'm going to win."

Cooney (25-0 21 KO's)

1977

Bill Jackson, New York KO 1
Jimmy Roberson, New York KO 2
Jose Rosario, Louisville KO 2
Matt Robinson, New York W 4
Joe Maye, New York KO 4
Quinnie Locklear, White Plains KO 1
Jimmy Sykes, Brooklyn KO 1

1978

Terry Lee Kidd, Hauppauge KO 1
Austin Johnson, Hempstead KO 1
Gary Bates, Las Vegas KO 4
S. T. Gordon, Las Vegas W disq. 4
G. G. Maldonado, New York KO 8
Charlie Polite, New York KO 4
Sam McGill, White Plains W 8
Grady Daniels, New York KO 5

1979

Eddie Lopez, Miami Beach W 8
Charlie Johnson, New York KO 1
Tom Prater, New York KO 2
Broderick Mason, New York KO 4
Malik Dozier, Commack KO 6
John Dino Dennis, New York KO 3
Leroy Boone, Atlantic City KO 6

1980

Jimmy Young, Atlantic City KO 4
Ron Lyle, New York KO 1

1981

Ken Norton, New York KO 1

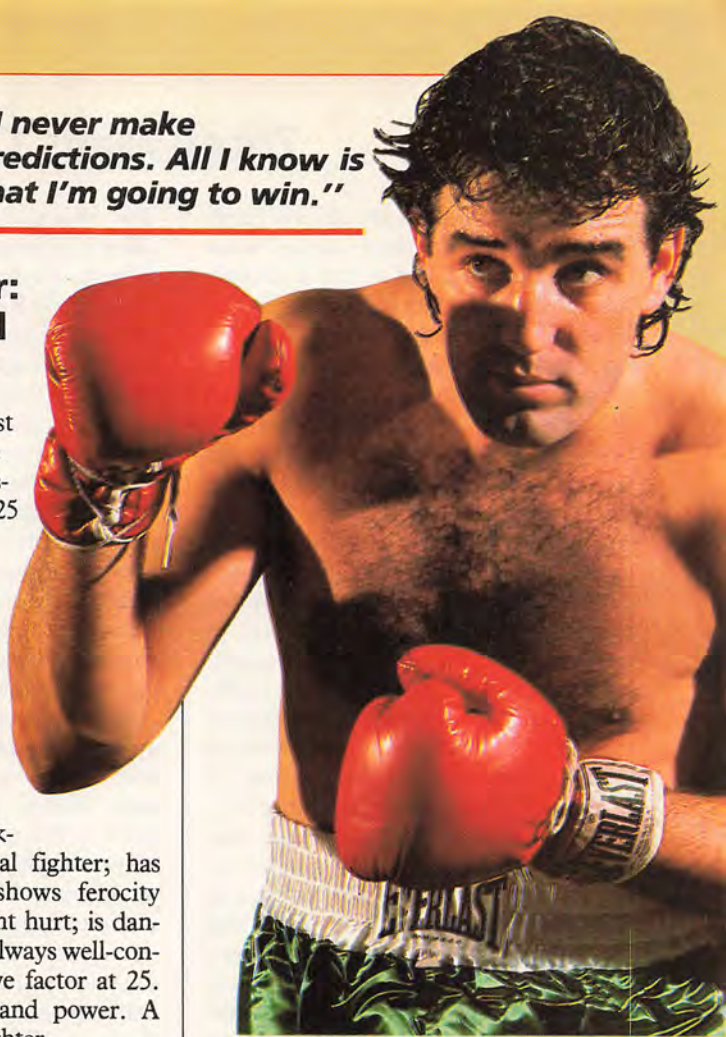
Tale of the Tape

Age	25
Weight	226
Height	6'6"
Reach	81"
Chest (normal)	44"
Chest (expanded)	46"
Biceps	17"
Forearm	14"
Waist	35"
Thigh	24½"
Calf	16"
Neck	19½"
Wrist	8"
Fist	12½"
Ankle	10½"

The Challenger: Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths: Has the most gifted left hand since Joe Louis. An imposing physical specimen (6 feet 6, 225 pounds). Eighty-one-inch reach. Always very aggressive; shows remarkable ability to cut off the ring. Devastating punching power; has hurt opponents with either hand and has scored knockouts with body punches; capable of breaking bones. An emotional fighter; has strong killer instinct; shows ferocity when he has his opponent hurt; is dangerous when he is hurt. Always well-conditioned; youth a positive factor at 25. Has underrated right hand power. A well-trained defensive fighter.

Weaknesses: Overall lack of experience; less than four minutes of in-the-ring experience in the last two years. Has rarely been hit hard, thus unproven ability to take a punch. Unproven ability to go the distance (has gone maximum of eight rounds twice). Has no "Big Fight" experience; very little "road" experience (20 of 25 fights have been within 90 miles of home). Converted southpaw; needs to further develop right hand as an offensive weapon and use it with greater frequency. Questionable strategist; shows a tendency to be predictable; unproven ability to adjust in the ring; leans to his corner support too heavily; cornermen lack big fight experience. Weak ring record; has not fought an opponent who tested him; can be surprised and can get flustered when not dominating an opponent. Unproven comeback capacity; has not had to respond to any in-the-ring setbacks.



In This Corner . . . The Cooney Team

Victor Valle, trainer. One-time featherweight hopeful during depression era. Fought and lost twice to Sammy Angott, former lightweight champ. Known as smart fighter, has converted same savvy to training methods. Recommended to Cooney by Cus D'Amato. Still holds job as building superintendent in New York. A "second father" to Cooney. Strong confidence builder and conditioner. Defensive specialist. Main man in corner; gives all tactical instructions and serves as cutman if needed.

Dennis Rappaport and Mike Jones, co-managers and cornermen. Provide support team for Valle in Cooney's corner. Real estate is their original business. Manage 10 fighters either together or separately. Combined stable record is 148-6 since taking over management.

ready made a million and he's nothing. He's just white."

Gerry Cooney hasn't fought very often. Maybe he is good. Maybe he belongs in a Superman suit. Then again, maybe he'll need one against the man who has proven, over and over, to be the class of the heavyweight division in re-

cent years. Cooney, for whatever latent talent he possesses, has been kept a closely guarded secret, almost as if Dennis Rappaport and Mike Jones, his co-managers, knew something they didn't want to share with the rest of the world.

For whatever reason, Cooney, going into the Holmes fight, will be well rest-

ed. Since May 25, 1980, or almost two years before the Vegas get-together, he has fought a grand total of 3 minutes 43 seconds, just over a full round. And that was against two washed-up fighters, Ron Lyle and Ken Norton. He knocked out Norton in 54 seconds last May 11, the only 54 seconds Cooney fought in 1981.

Three Ways Cooney Could Win

Many of the experts are picking Larry Holmes because they know what Holmes can do. What no one is entirely sure of is what Gerry Cooney can do. Here are three things he might do.

1. The First-Round Knockout.

With shocking similarity to his 54-second KO of Ken Norton, Gerry Cooney rushes bull-like out of his corner and instantly puts Holmes on the defensive. Ringside observers wait for the champion's offensive response, but it doesn't happen. Backpedaling with surprise at Cooney's fearless attack, Holmes takes a solid left jab to the chin and retreats to the ropes. Cooney scores quickly, not allowing his opponent to fight back, landing a flurry of combinations that stun Holmes. His killer instinct aroused, Cooney unleashes a brutal left to Holmes' rib cage that traps him on the ropes, guard down and knees buckling. Cooney senses the conquest and lets go with a swift combination to the head of the now powerless Holmes and drops him to the canvas as the referee waves the triumphant Cooney back to the neutral corner. For the third consecutive fight, Gerry Cooney has not needed the bell to end round one.

"All Cooney's fights were fixed without being paid off," Holmes says. "Norton, I don't know what he went in there for, 36 years old. Yeah, I know. Money. Same as Lyle. I knew Norton was going to lose when I talked to him before the fight. I asked him why he was doing it. 'Ah, I could use the money,' he said."

The disgust is crescendoing. "Gerry Cooney's a hoax," he says. "I don't want to knock him out in 54 seconds. I want to cut him up. I want to make his nose bleed, I want to make his eyes bleed, I want to hurt him in the body. I want to let him know what it's like to taste his own blood."

It is hardly a Mission Impossible. More than likely, it will be "mission accomplished" about the seventh round.

make the odds on this fight 100 to 1," says Jimmy Jacobs, the boxing film impresario and fight manager. "I throw out Cooney's last fights, the ones against the old men, and go back to his last competitive opponent, which was Leroy Boone. After watching that fight, with Boone getting Cooney in trouble and Cooney not appearing to know what to

2. The Seventh-Round Knockout.

The seventh round again proves unlucky for Larry Holmes; both Earnie Shavers and Renaldo Snipes have decked him in the seventh. Holmes, ahead on rounds and seemingly in control of the fight, fails to block a series of punches to the body that quickly sap the champion's power. Cooney, bleeding from cuts above the right eye and the mouth, senses Holmes' fatigue and begins to press him into the corner, cutting off the ring as he does so well. Cooney's eyes widen as he begins an assault on the stationary champion. Holmes fires back valiantly, connecting a crisp right uppercut off of a clutch, but Cooney proves his chin is as strong as his heart. Backing away, then wading in toward Holmes, who is now supported by the corner post, Cooney uncorks a destructive left hand to Holmes' ribs, the force of the blow prompting the champion to lose his mouthpiece. Now, guarding his rib cage with his right hand, Holmes is defenseless against Cooney's onslaught. After four successive left hands to Holmes' bobbing head, the referee steps in to stop the bout. Holmes, standing but beaten, offers no resistance to the decision.

do about it, I have to believe this is a total mismatch. Cooney doesn't have a chance."

The Boone fight took place December 14, 1979, and before Cooney scored a sixth-round knockout with a fierce left hook to the body, the club fighter had been giving Cooney problems merely by punching back. After Boone, Rappaport and Jones kept Cooney away from anyone in his own age bracket.

Ray Arcel, the 82-year-old trainer whom Holmes has invited back to his corner after a three-year absence, puts the accent on the positive. "I tell Larry he puts too much emphasis on his opponents," Arcel says, "and not enough on his own talents. This is a hell of a boxer."

The man who worked with such fighters as Benny Leonard and Barney Ross, and more recently with Roberto Duran, says, "If Holmes loses, it won't be because Cooney was the better fighter. It'll be because Holmes was a stupid fighter. And is Holmes stupid? Not by a long shot.

"I've worked thousands and thousands of fights," Arcel adds, "and I've

3. The 15-Round Decision. No one at ringside had imagined it going this far. Both fighters, battered and spent, are toe-to-toe in mid-ring, trading punches without real power. The press row is buzzing with whispers as to how the fight has been scored. Holmes has certainly been the more artful boxer. For most of the first 10 rounds he has demonstrated his great movement, dancing side to side and throwing the telling left jab. But he hasn't connected with the big punch, and in the late rounds he has slowed considerably. Cooney has shown great heart throughout the fight and has definitely scored the more decisive blows, hurting the champ with a flurry at the end of round four and surprising him with a big left in the sixth that knocked Holmes down. The whispers are saying that Cooney is ahead on the scorecards. As the seconds tick off in the 15th, Cooney, who few thought could go the distance, musters a last wave of energy and scores successively at the bell. Both fighters raise their weary arms in triumph, but it's a stunning unanimous decision. The new heavyweight champion of the world is Gerry Cooney.

—Bill Duncan

never bet five cents on a fight in my life. But if I had to bet on any fight, I'd have to bet on Holmes to win this one."

Arcel likes Holmes for two reasons: experience and his magnificent left jab. "Give me a good experienced fighter who can use a left jab," he says, "and I wouldn't be afraid to put him in with anybody."

Dennis Rappaport, his fighter's tireless promoter, says Cooney's jab will neutralize the Champ's. Arcel believes Cooney is off-balance when he jabs. "He looks like the converted southpaw he is," he says.

Holmes' determination, occasionally lacking in the past, is burning once again. This is a man who does not want to go on boxing, a man who is tired of the politics in the sport, disheartened by the current federal investigations. Don King, the promoter who represents the Champ, is apparently one of the major targets. Holmes has had to testify before a federal grand jury.

"You have to have goals," says the Champ. "I didn't feel like fighting Weaver in 1979. [Mike Weaver gave an out-of-shape Holmes fits before Holmes

scored a 12th-round knockout.] I didn't care. I didn't even train for Weaver. At that time, I had maybe \$3 million and I said to myself, 'What am I fighting for?' I never expected to become champion when I started. All I wanted was to earn enough money to take care of my family. I'm tired of this bull."

His goal since then has been to gain the respect he feels he deserves. Against opponents he knew could not help him gain respect, he went through the motions. But Leon Spinks, the former champion, the man who had dethroned Ali, became an obsession. After Holmes' lackluster performance against Trevor Berbick, it had appeared as if the tenacious Spinks could score an upset. But the Champ, motivated again, showed up in prime condition and destroyed Spinks in three rounds.

Now some say the Champ is slipping because Renaldo Snipes, who doesn't know how to throw a left jab, knocked him down with a wild right hand last November 6 in a tune-up for Cooney.

"Caesar's Palace didn't want me to fight Snipes," Holmes says. "Thousands of times they told me not to risk the Cooney fight. I said, 'I'm champ; if anything happens to me, it's supposed to happen.' Besides, I can't lay off from June [when he fought Spinks] to March. I wouldn't feel good, as strong as I do now, if I had a nine-month layoff.

"Last year was supposed to be my last year, remember?" the Champ says. "Why didn't I quit after Spinks like I planned? Because of Cooney. People kept telling me, 'Larry, you can't quit, they'll say you're ducking Cooney.'

Well, I'm here to eliminate all that nonsense."

To understand Larry Holmes, you have to understand where he's coming from: Easton, Pennsylvania, where he has lived for the last 27 years of his 32-year-old life.

"Easton is a blue-collar town," says Dick Lovell, president of the local chapter of the NAACP and a frequent visitor to the second-story offices of Larry Holmes Enterprises on Northampton Street. On the same street, opposite a bric-a-brac boutique incongruously named Utopia, the Champ has a disco, Round One, and his restaurant-bar, Four Corners, and a sporting goods store.

The recession has not treated Easton kindly, Lovell is saying. There have been layoffs at the Mack Truck plant and at the American Can Company's Dixie Cup factory, and now the textile mills are struggling. But the town, about 35 miles north of Philadelphia, where the Lehigh River and Canal meets the Delaware, is freshly scrubbed and bright. "Holmes," says Lovell, "is the key to the revitalization." The Champ laughs. "I'm like a flu," he says. "Everyone catches it." Larry Holmes is Easton, Pennsylvania.

Dennis Rappaport is trying to explain how Cooney cannot lose. There are people who believe that deep down Dennis knows better himself and that deep, deep down, he is laughing; there are people who think that Rappaport has taken an unproven commodi-

ty and attached a \$10-million price tag to The Great White Hope. The skeptics are more likely to tag him The Great White Hoax.

Nevertheless, Rappaport does not waver as he sings Cooney's praises.

"Break the fight down into several categories," he says. "Holmes has the experience. Sure, but you can also look at it like he has aging legs. He's closer to 34 than he is to 32. The experience is balanced by age. I think Holmes has proven without doubt that he is underrated, that he is a fine heavyweight champion, but he can be hit and he can be hurt. Renaldo Snipes, for God's sake, had him down, but he couldn't finish him. Imagine if Gerry ever got him hurt. Gerry has power, but people don't realize he also has quick hands. I don't think Holmes has fought a fighter with both the punching power and hand speed of Gerry.

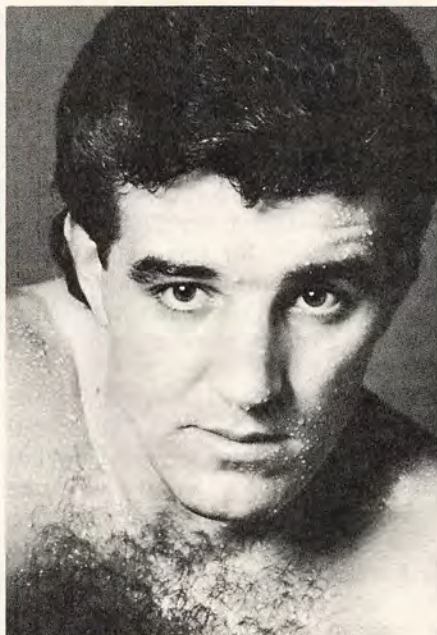
"Holmes has a good left jab and a quick right cross of questionable power and a decent uppercut. But there's no way in the world he can hurt Cooney. Holmes doesn't hit hard enough, and Gerry can take a hell of a punch.

"Now take the jab. The way to beat a jabber is with a jab. When Norton was using his jab against Larry, he started to win that fight. Once Holmes gets hit with Gerry's jab, it's going to break his whole rhythm. I don't believe Holmes can dance 15 rounds and no one in the division can cut off a ring better than Gerry.

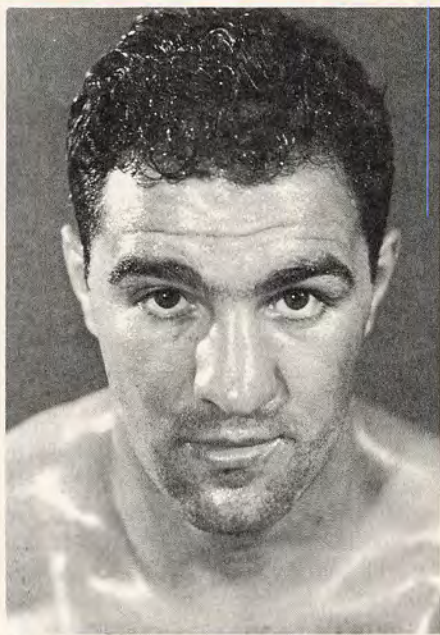
"Gerry is bigger, younger, stronger and he punches harder. Holmes has no ammunition to keep him away. When the bell rings, Gerry's going to be on him

Gerry and Rocky

Gerry Cooney was born in 1956, the same year Rocky Marciano retired from boxing. For the superstitious boxing fan, the striking resemblance between the two men is downright eerie. But before anyone says "reincarnation," let's clear the record: the similarity stops at the shoulders. Cooney stands 6 feet 6 and weighs 225 pounds; Marciano stood 5 feet 11 and weighed 184. Cooney has a reach of 81 inches; Marciano had the shortest reach of any heavyweight champion, 68 inches. Cooney's great weapon is his thunderous left hand; Marciano delivered most of his 43 KOs with his famous crashing right. There is, however, one feature of Marciano that Cooney would dearly love to duplicate: The Rock was the only heavyweight in history to retire undefeated.



Gerry Cooney, 1982



Rocky Marciano, 1953

like a bee on honey. There will not be any feeling-out round. I can see the fight so clear. Holmes will go bye-bye within five rounds."

Rappaport is also the man who, when Cooney had originally agreed to fight Mike Weaver last year for the less prestigious WBA title and for only \$3 million, insisted that Weaver was the tougher opponent of the two reigning heavyweight champions. He has now dubbed the Holmes-Cooney bout as "the greatest event in history."

Yet Cooney, despite 21 knockouts in 25 fights, has not proven with any certainty that he is a puncher of the caliber of an Earnie Shavers or a George Foreman. At 6 feet 5 or 6 feet 6, and with an obviously meaningful left hook, he is, of course, dangerous. But as a converted southpaw, his right hand is not of heavyweight proportions. He has little experience in actual combat and has yet to prove he can take a punch, go the distance or handle the kind of speed Holmes still possesses at 32.

Rappaport and Jones insist Cooney has matured as a boxer under the careful direction of trainer Victor Valle. Cooney calls Valle "the greatest trainer in the world." But Holmes is not impressed by Valle's techniques.

"He's teaching Cooney to make mistakes," Holmes says, smiling. "When Cooney comes out for me, he'll be programmed. But what happens when you start to throw a punch and don't throw it? And then throw something else? The object is to set up the man for a punch. Boxing is a chess game. If you have two fighters and everything is equal and if we think alike but I think just a little faster, I'm going to kick the other guy's butt. I'll make it go so quickly, eight, nine punches, and all of a sudden, he'll be set up. It's actually more like checkers. Chess is slower."

"Cooney might be a good fighter and he might be a strong puncher. But he's not ready for me. I'm going to trick the hell out of him, play with him. He'll be scared to death before the fight and especially when I go out and hit him with some good punches right off the bat. 'Whop. Whop. This is for real, boy.'"

Larry Holmes begins circling around the ring; there are no trainers to supervise, and none are needed. He knows what he is doing. Ostensibly, he is loosening up, but already he is thinking of Cooney. The circles he dances around an imaginary opponent are mostly to his left, away from the imaginary left hook. And as he moves, his left jab,

Holmes or Cooney: The Experts' Picks

George Benton, trainer. "I give Cooney a puncher's chance. Everything else about the fight favors Holmes."

Richie Giachetti, former trainer of Larry Holmes. "If they don't try to change him, Larry will win. I hear they're trying to work on Larry's leverage and make him believe he's a power puncher. If he changes for this fight, he could lose his title."

Gil Clancy, CBS boxing analyst and former trainer of Emile Griffith. "I like Cooney. I think he'll stop Holmes. Holmes is going to have trouble compensating for Cooney's height advantage. Everybody Cooney hits, he hurts."

Cus D'Amato, former trainer of champions Floyd Patterson and Jose Torres. "I always believed Cooney would win until I saw Howard Cosell invite Cooney over to share Holmes' spotlight after Holmes had beaten Leon Spinks. Holmes lunged at Cooney, and the look in Cooney's eyes showed fear. I've always said that if one guy can intimidate the other guy, the intimidator will win."

Angelo Dundee, trainer of Muhammad Ali and Sugar Ray Leonard. "It will be decided by a knockout, but it is a tough fight to figure. I'm concerned about Cooney's ability to go a distance and about Larry's preparation—he gets up for big fights, but lets down for others. I think he'll be ready for Cooney. I look for Cooney to win early or for Larry to win late, and, in either case, it will be decided by a knockout."

Emanuel Steward, trainer for Thomas Hearns. "About a year ago, I picked Cooney because I thought he would keep up a regular schedule of fights and gain the experience he needed. Now I pick Holmes because he is a good fundamental fighter with excellent hand activity. I think that Larry Holmes has a burning desire for this fight—it is a chance to obtain the recognition he deserves. Ali didn't give him credibility, but with a win over Cooney he can get it for the first time."

Muhammad Ali, The Greatest. "Look for Cooney in a knockout. He can hit! Holmes showed his weakness against Snipes, and Cooney can hit a lot harder than Snipes. I don't think all the attention will bother Cooney. He's so close to a dream that he'll be more serious and he'll fight his best fight. The more fearful, the more nervous an athlete is, the better he performs."

one of the finest in heavyweight history, pounds the air.

"It's going to be Everlast in his face, all night long," he yells down, still circling. "And I don't have to move like this. I'll be able to move side to side, pull back and then let him have it."

"Big tall guys should play basketball," the Champ says as he continues to circle and jab. "Cooney's going to retire after this. He don't want to fight. You can fool the people, but you can't fool yourself. He knows it. He's scared now. Only reason he's fighting is \$10 million. He knows he ain't got a chance. Big guys can't fight, not for long. Look at Foreman. Ray Arcel says Cooney's cork will pop after four rounds. When I leave the dressing room, before I get to the ropes, the nice guy walks out and I feel like I'm floating on air," he says. "And I get nasty."

He will get nastier and nastier as the fight draws closer. Holmes is a veteran of big fight hype; not even Ali could ruffle him. Cooney has never faced it before.

It doesn't bother Holmes as much now, that he has never been accepted for what he is, one of the finest heavyweights in history. Holmes shrugs. "They'll realize how great I am after I retire, when I'm old and gray," he says. "I don't expect it now. Don King says, 'Get yourself hit by a car and they'll say, Oh what a champ.'"

"I'll beat Cooney and I still won't get recognition. Then I'll try and unify the title and get out. Weaver can't mean as much as Cooney, I've beaten him already. But you know what they'll say when I beat Cooney."

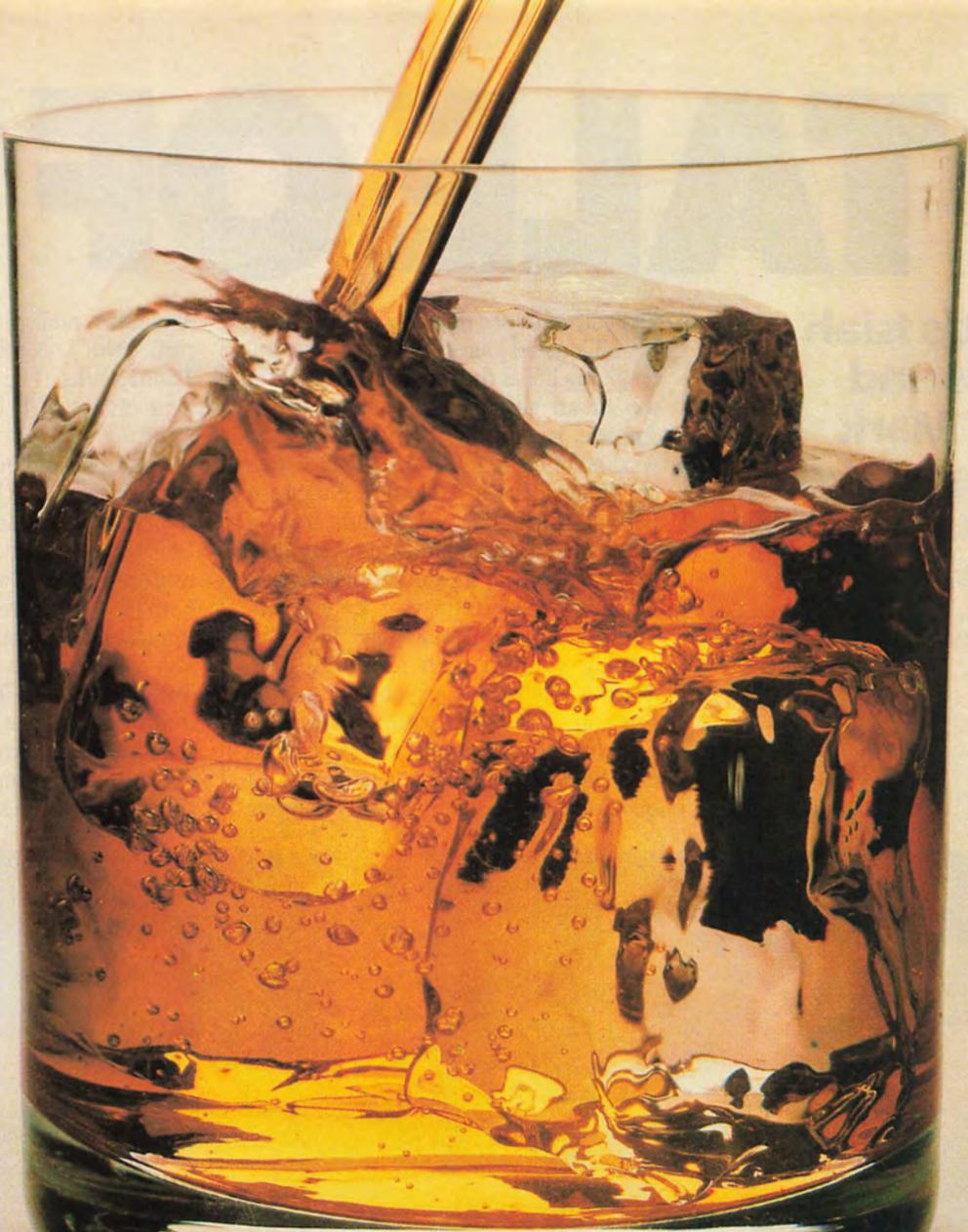
"Cooney can't convince people I'm good. Cooney can only convince people he wasn't ready for me, that he never fought anybody before, that he got tired. It took me three years for people to start to respect me. If I retire and another champion comes along, like Dokes or Page, it will take three years for the public to accept them. It'll take Cooney two seconds."

The phone rings on his desk and the Champ begins talking about his kid brother Mark, an undefeated middleweight prospect whose career he is guiding.

"Nah, I don't want anyone dangerous for him yet," he tells the caller. "I want to bring him along nice and slowly."

The Champ turns and winks. "I want to bring him along like a Cooney." ★

Michael Katz is the 1981 recipient of the Nat Fleischer Memorial Award for excellence in boxing journalism.



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A TALE OF TV

Detroit's Isiah Thomas and Dallas' Mark Aguirre are best friends. But who's the best?

by Mike Downey

If you could see them now. A couple of millionaires, ages 22 and 20, are enjoying life at the top—in this case, the top of an elegant Dallas hotel. Mark Aguirre is offering Isiah Thomas the wisdom of his years, as he has since their childhood days in Chicago. Thomas is determined to make a midnight meal of chili and a chocolate-fudge sundae. “No, Zeke, no,” Aguirre pleads with Thomas. “Don’t do that to yourself. You’re a big NBA star now. Don’t be ruining yourself with no chili.” Dr. Charles Tucker, a psychologist from Lansing, Michigan, who advises them on many other decisions, stays out of this one. So does lovely Rita, a late-night acquaintance who sits by silently, sipping

Amaretto and pineapple juice. “No chili. No!” Aguirre insists. “No?” Thomas asks. The waiter arrives to take their order. “I’ll have the chili,” says Aguirre.

They joke and poke each other until it hurts, these two buddies who are so completely different yet so much alike. This was supposed to be a postgame party after their first night as National Basketball Association opponents, but Aguirre was limping around on a right foot with a broken bone. He sat in street clothes watching Thomas and the Detroit Pistons defeat his Dallas Mavericks at the Reunion Arena. Then they went off together to spend some time talking about their futures, talking about their



VO ROOKIES

pasts, and talking about the presents that were waiting for them back home in Chicago, where they would be returning the next day to celebrate Christmas.

● h, if you could see them now. It is November 12 at the Silverdome in Pontiac, Michigan. Thomas goes on a rampage against the Cleveland Cavaliers, scoring 32 points—his high for the first half of the season—stealing the ball six times and passing for nine assists. The Pistons are hot. They blow by the Cavaliers, 130-99.

It is two days later, November 14, at the Reunion Arena in Dallas. Aguirre goes on a scoring rampage against Golden State. It is his biggest game of the year

before being sidelined by a broken toe a few weeks later. He scores 42 points and pulls down eight rebounds. Alas, the Mavericks lose again, 118-112.

Those benchmark games, the same week, typified the nature of each player's success in his rookie year. Both proved early that, though underclassmen last year, they can excel among pros. Thomas has proven it on an improved, exciting team; Aguirre has proven it on a loser that, despite him, continues to lose.

Talent and circumstance have forced these friends into a kind of competition. They were rivals to be No. 1 in last year's college draft, and they are pitted as rival saviors of the two worst teams of

last season. Who will be the first to lead his team to the promised land? They are not alike as players. Thomas is a 6-foot-1 point guard, charged with running a team; Aguirre is a 6-foot-7 forward, charged with scoring. What makes them alike and what makes them rivals is that they are superior all-around talents, the best tandem of rookies since Earvin Johnson and Larry Bird entered the league in 1979. What makes the rivalry pointed is the remarkable parallel of their lives to date.

Big Drawers and Biddy Ball

Oh, if you could have seen them then. It's the early 1970s on the gang-warring West Side of Chicago. "K Town," it's called, since so many of the street names begin with the same letter. Thomas and Aguirre are a couple of corner playground acquaintances, 16 months apart in age, eight blocks apart in the neighborhood. Aguirre is the older, taller, heavier of the two—much heavier. "Big Drawers," he's called, or "Pillsbury Dough Boy." But he can shoot the basketball.

"At the time, I thought that's all there was to it," Aguirre says, looking back. But nobody picked him in the pickup games. "My first memory of Mark is at the Martin Luther King Boys Club," Thomas says. "We'd choose up sides, but he wouldn't get chosen. Too fat."

Mark goes on defense. "Well, the first time I saw Zeke here, he was playing Biddy Basketball. Biddy Basketball—for all the iddy-biddy basketball players."

Isiah was small, Mark was tall. Isiah was the youngest of 10 children, Mark the oldest of four. Isiah played basketball at a Catholic high school in the suburbs. Mark spent two years in the neighborhood at Austin High, then transferred after a white principal fired a black coach. Before they got out of high school, Isiah became an all-America guard, Mark an all-America forward. They moved on to play for two college coaches, Bobby Knight and Ray Meyer, who were no more alike than a piranha and a panda. Thomas won a national championship with a team that lost nine games. Aguirre did not win a national championship with a team that didn't lose nine games in two years.

Yet there have been so many similari-



Two of a Kind

- Grew up eight blocks apart on Chicago's West Side.
- Learned to play ball on the same playgrounds.
- As all-Americans, led different Chicago high schools to the state tournament in different years, but failed to win a state title.
- Started on the 1980 U.S. Olympic basketball team.
- Were the top two college players of 1980-81; consensus all-Americans.
- Renounced their college eligibility together.
- Were selected 1-2 in 1981 NBA draft.
- Hired the same attorney.
- Bought matching Mercedes.
- Were named co-Rookies of the Month in their first month in the league.
- Enjoyed their best pro games two nights apart.
- Suffered their first serious injuries the same week.

Razzle-dazzle rookies: Mark Aguirre flashes his style, Isiah Thomas flashes his smile.

ties. They learned on the same playgrounds. Both come from large, mother-dominated families. Both mothers are named Mary. Both boys took their high school teams to the state tournament but failed to win a championship. Both played on the U.S. Olympic team and became bright stars of college basketball. They renounced their eligibility together. They went 1-2 in the NBA draft. They hired the same attorney. They bought matching Mercedes. After their first four weeks in professional basketball they were named co-NBA rookies of the month. They had their best pro games within two nights of each other. Both suffered leg injuries in the seventh week of the season. "He's always copying me," Mark Aguirre kids Isiah Thomas. Even their names both have 11 letters.

"What should we do next?" asks Isiah.

"Co-MVPs in the NBA," says Mark. "Give us three years."

"Aw, don't say that," says Isiah.

"Three years. What do you think, Zeke? Three years?"

"Maybe we could just buy a team,"

says Isiah, laughing.

Lord knows, and so does Isiah Lord Thomas III, what team that would be. He thinks about the Chicago Bulls night and day. He thinks about them so much he still can't believe they didn't swing a deal to draft him ahead of Detroit. He thinks about them so much, free agency is already in the back of his mind. "Contracts aren't so long," he says. "A couple more years, then who knows?" With its downtown flavor and megadecibel noise level, Chicago Stadium is Isiah's idea of heaven. "I love that place. I hate playing at the Silverdome. It's not even like basketball in a big football stadium like that. And it's laid out all wrong besides." Nothing against Detroit, he says, "But if I can't go to Chicago, I don't care much where I have to play."

Aguirre listens to all this and looks surprised. "You really think so, Zeke?" he asks. "I used to think so, but Chicago hasn't been lucky for me. I don't know if I'd like playing there or not."

"Hey man, picture this," Isiah says. "You and David Greenwood at forward, Artis [Gilmore] at center, me and Reggie

[Theus] at the guards. Who'd beat us? You tell me. Who'd beat us?" Aguirre smiles. Sounds good to him. "But you might as well forget it," he tells Thomas, "'cause it ain't gonna happen."

Race to Salvation

For the time being, Thomas and Aguirre must remain the main men of struggling teams. Dallas and Detroit made the first and second picks in the draft because neither could win more than 21 of 82 games last season. They needed leaders, not helpers.

The Mavericks had intended to take Thomas until three days before the draft. Then Don Carter, who owns the team, invited Aguirre to his ranch. Mark was impressed. Carter had split-level horse stables and a marble swimming pool and his own personal train car. Carter, too, was impressed. "Mark was a charming, confident person. We hit it off immediately," he said. Practically on the spot, Carter said he would take Aguirre.

Being bypassed by Dallas was okay with Thomas. For one thing, he knew that being picked first meant more to Aguirre, who had always been the senior partner in their friendship. Also, Aguirre might adjust better to cowboy country, Thomas believed. After all, didn't Aguirre go to many of his DePaul games dressed in Western boots and a Stetson hat? Thomas was a three-piece-suit man himself, and when he happened to mention that within earshot of the Dallas media, the word got out that Thomas was putting down cowboy outfits. "Or something like that," he says. "Like it was some big deal. Do you really think they would resent me down here because I like to wear suits? I think they'd still come see me play basketball, don't you?"

They did that night when the Pistons visited Dallas, as they have in arenas all over the league when Detroit has been in town. Just before the game started that night, Aguirre said, "All right, I'm waiting to see those amazing things you're supposed to be able to do." But on his second night back after missing five games with a sprained ankle, Thomas was not his usual frisky self. Coach Scotty Robertson used him for only 11 minutes of the first half, during which time he produced no points, no rebounds and one assist. Detroit made 35 percent of its shots and trailed by 10 points.

"That doesn't mean nothing to him," Aguirre said at halftime. "He's liable to go out now and score 40." What he did instead was get the Pistons' fast break

First Rate Second Fiddles

Dallas and Detroit got more than one hero apiece out of last year's college draft. In fact, besides featuring the two NBA Rookie of the Month winners in November—Aguirre and Thomas—they showcased two different Rookies of the Month in December—Jay Vincent (Mavericks) and Kelly Tripucka (Pistons). Tripucka has proven to be so effective that during Aguirre's two-month layoff due to injury, he emerged as teammate Thomas' principal competition for Rookie of the Year honors.

The Pistons' second pick in the first round of the draft—and 12th overall—Tripucka (photo, left) was considered by some to be too weak or too white or too something to make it as a star in the NBA. He proved those people wrong in a hurry. Over the first half of the season he averaged 20 points and over five rebounds a game, and ranked third on the team in assists. He scored over 30 points five times, including a season-high 38 points against Julius Erving and the Philadelphia 76ers; he scored 67 points in two games against the New York Knicks.

Meanwhile in Dallas, the Mavericks used their first pick in the second round to acquire Vincent, a forward. Vincent took over Aguirre's spot when Mark was injured, and promptly showed that he had been undervalued in the draft. Already recognized as a stronger rebounder than Aguirre, Jay proved he could shoot, as demonstrated by his 41-point performance against Kansas City in late December. Explains Vincent, "It went through my mind when Mark was hurt: 'Here's your big chance.' I didn't want to waste it." Aguirre casts a long shadow, however, and with his return to action, Vincent will probably have to adjust again to being first fiddle off the bench.



going, and they won by eight. It was the second game of a four-game winning streak for a team that went on to win 13 times by New Year's Day—the same team that (without Thomas) won 21 games during the entire previous season. Thomas seemed to have an early lock on the Rookie of the Year award.

"Individual awards don't mean anything, not *anything*," Thomas said when told that Aguirre's injury had probably dimmed Mark's prospects for winning the award. "You ask Larry Bird what he wanted most his first year in the pros: to be Rookie of the Year, or to be on the championship team like Magic was."

The Brotherhood

Magic Johnson has become a kind of prototype for both of them. Johnson, Thomas and Aguirre are all clients of George Andrews, a 32-year-old Chicago attorney who usually has a smile on his face and a TRY GOD pin on his lapel.

Andrews and Dr. Tucker, also a Johnson advisor, have been busy steering their three celebrated clients into business ventures. Magic, Mark and Isiah are already part owners of an AM radio station outside Denver and are seeking an interest in a Texas oil well. "They're as close as competitors can be," Andrews says. "Especially Mark and Isiah. They may not seem too much alike sometimes, but they're really similar people."

If you could see him now. It is March 1981, at the Spectrum in Philadelphia, and Indiana has just won the NCAA basketball championship. Isiah is being carried off the court by a mob of hysterical Hoosiers, a brilliant grin on his face.

And that has become his image. America's sweetheart. Impish. Playful. But he is also moody. And ambitious. One night he hassled the Piston's official scorer for short-changing him on assists. There have been reports of intermittent disputes with Scotty Robertson over how Thomas runs the offense, and there are those who just don't buy the smile. Will it fade when things go sour?

Aguirre knows about that. Again, it is March 1981. DePaul is playing its first game in the Mideast Regional tournament. The year before, after the Blue Demons had been upset in tournament play by Arizona State, Aguirre had run out of the building weeping. Now, another upset, as St. Joseph's defeats DePaul in the regionals. Aguirre pulls off his jersey, throws it to the floor, runs off a side door and heaves the ball as far as he can.

"Mark's just never been one to hide

his feelings," George Andrews says. "Defeat comes hard to him." He is capable of being every bit as charming as Thomas, but that is not his image. He shows his emotion more than Thomas does. He has a reputation for being hard to handle.

"He's been no problem whatsoever," says Dick Motta, coach of the Mavericks. "Anything we've asked Mark to do, he's done." Still, though the fans love his soft shooting touch and his whirlwind dunks, they blame him for the failures of his team. "I just try to do the best I can," he says. "You're not going to change people's minds. They have a certain image of you and you're never going to change that."

Thomas gets the benefit of the doubt, Aguirre gets the doubt. They may not like it, but people *will* measure them against each other. A couple of naturals who naturally invite comparison.

Rich and Famous

After last year's NCAA Tournament, Thomas and Aguirre again started hanging around together. They made their

"hardship" announcements jointly. They went to New York City to do talk shows. They spent most of the summer together, traveling around, playing ball, waiting for training camp to begin. Then they went their separate ways, talking on the telephone now and then, but not seeing each other very often.

"You're just lucky I wasn't out there tonight, Zeke," Aguirre needles his buddy at their Dallas dinner. A waitress delivers a note. "A young lady said to give this to you," she tells Aguirre. "You sure you got the right man?" Thomas asks. He breaks up laughing. Lovely Rita smiles. Dr. Tucker says, "As your advisor, I'd better read this first." He takes the note and drops it, pretending his fingers are on fire. "You're not ready for a note like this," he tells Aguirre. Mark starts laughing too. Isiah is laughing so hard, he's pounding the table with his fist. "Now this," Isiah says, "is why we wanted to play professional basketball." ★

Mike Downey is a sportswriter for the Detroit Free Press.

Buck Williams: Best of Them All?

The third player taken in last year's draft, after Aguirre and Thomas, was another underclassman, a 6-foot-8, 215-pound junior rebounder from Maryland. Most analysts distrusted his thin frame and his shooting touch, and he was not considered to be a franchise savior like the two other prospects. But Buck Williams may prove to be the best rookie of all this season.

Before the season was half over, Williams' rebounding was being surpassed only by that of Houston's Moses Malone and Seattle's Jack Sikma, and only Malone had been more effective on the offensive boards. Williams averaged over 12 rebounds a game. Recently, against the Atlanta Hawks, Buck pulled down 20 rebounds and scored 10 points. A few days later, he had 21 rebounds and 18 points against the Milwaukee Bucks.

"You take a consensus around the league," says Bill Fitch, the coach of the Boston Celtics, "and find you have three outstanding rookies: Kelly Tripucka, Isiah Thomas and Buck Williams. Buck has been the steadiest. I like him as a rebounder and for his inside offense. He's also a team man. Even in games where his scoring stats are low he helps his team win."

Williams' strength, quickness and toughness against taller and wiser veterans, as well as his jumper from 8-10 feet, have been a revelation. "It was not surprising to believe that someday he would be a great pro," says Larry Brown, coach of the Nets. "But he's adjusted so quickly, developed so rapidly. That's what's been surprising to me."

Brown insists the obvious star quality of Aguirre and Thomas didn't blind him at draft time. Said Brown to reporters, "I figured Buck was the class of the draft."

—Ruth Bonapace



WHY CAN'T NORTH CAROLINA WIN THE BIG ONE?



by Arnold Schechter

The Tar Heels' Dean Smith is the best coach never to win a national championship. He may be too good for his own good.

Dean Smith teaches (above) and reaches for a title.

On a chilly, black evening in Philadelphia last March, a thick-bodied farmer and his equally substantial wife trudged silently through the Spectrum parking lot. They had driven 500 miles to see Dean Smith's North Carolina Tar Heels win a national championship, but Indiana's Bobby Knight had rewritten the script. Smith, in his sixth trip to the Final Four, was a loser again. "Wail," the farmer finally said to his wife, "I guess ol' Dean just can't win the big one."

Can it be true? Can a coach who has led his teams to 436 wins and a won-loss percentage of .753 over 20 years going into this season and who was twice voted national Coach of the Year, be unable to win an NCAA title? Is the "professor of basketball" forever doomed to flunk the final exam of the course he teaches?



True believers could unearth more than their share of excuses for Smith: Injuries. Physically overmatched teams. The rigors of the ACC Tournament. The pressure of breaking Smith's losing streak. Bad luck. Constellations in unfavorable alignments over the tobacco fields during March.

Some excuses may make sense, but there aren't enough of them to cover 20 years. First, it isn't true that the Tar Heels labor under extra pressure. They used to have to survive the mine field of the ACC Tournament for an NCAA bid, but now many teams compete in conference tournaments, and a team doesn't have to win one to be invited to the ever-expanding NCAA party. And trying to win a first title for Smith isn't a special burden to his players. "As far as all of us are concerned," says senior point guard

Jimmy Black, "getting the coach a championship is an added incentive."

Smith certainly has had enough talented athletes to go to the top—more than anyone except UCLA and the New York Yankees. Twenty-four of Smith's players have become pros, and six of them—Billy Cunningham, Charlie Scott, Bob McAdoo, Bobby Jones, Walter Davis and Phil Ford—were pro Rookies of the Year. Between 1967 and 1978 Smith had from four to seven future pros on every team. This year he has at least three: James Worthy, Sam Perkins and Mike Jordan. Says John Kuester, who in four years played with Ford, Davis, Jones, Tom LaGarde, Mitch Kupchak, Dudley Bradley and Mike O'Koren, "I thought we were going to win every time we stepped out on the court, because when we were healthy we always had more tal-

The Tar Heels' twin towers, Worthy and Perkins (right), may bring Dean his dream.

ent than the other team."

Carolina's stretch runs haven't been stopped by bad luck, either. The average margin of Smith's six Final Four losses is 12 points, and none of those games was decided by a basket at the buzzer.

So what culprit is frustrating Smith's title ambitions?

Not his preparation. His practices are masterfully orchestrated. Not his bench-coaching. He is controlled and resourceful, endlessly fine-tuning his team's maneuvers. Not his offense. Carolina fast breaks with the murderous efficiency of the Boston Celtics. And Smith's favorite half-court offense, a freelance passing

game, usually produces short shots against any active defense. It is easy to learn and execute, even when mixed with a few set plays.

Smith's most likely nemesis, my dear Watson, is his defense.

The Knockout Approach

Defense. This improbable answer takes some explaining, because good defense is as high a priority to Dean Smith as good timing was to Jack Benny. Smith stresses that it is defense that "dictates the game" and "makes the difference

between a good team and a great team." He thinks and breathes defense all day, and, it seems, all night; when Frank McGuire was North Carolina's coach, and Smith was his assistant and road trip roommate, McGuire awoke one night to find Smith sleepwalking—hovering over his bed in a defensive stance.

Smith's thinking and dreaming have created an elegantly complicated system of multiple defenses. His basic approach is a pressure man-to-man, but he alternates this with a rotating man-to-man called the "run-and-jump," a combina-

tion zone and man-to-man called the "scramble," and a pure zone. Smith prefers "change for change's sake," because he likes to keep the tempo fast and "take the offense on defense."

By gambling and scrambling, running and jumping, hopping and hooting, North Carolina hopes to surprise opponents and disrupt their offensive patterns. When turnovers and misses come, UNC fast breaks, trying to score points in knockout spurts.

This system can put on an impressive, hustling show, as it did earlier this season in an 82-69 Tar Heel win over highly regarded Kentucky, but most coaches wouldn't touch it with a 10-foot basket support. One of them is Indiana's Knight, who uses a half-court offense similar to Smith's, but relies solely on a simple, man-to-man defense. Knight credits the Hoosiers' domination of the 1981 NCAA field—they won by a margin of almost 23 points a game—to his straightforward methods. "The reason we finish strong is that we don't do a lot of different things," he says. "We are simple in our approach, both offensively and defensively. When you don't change things a lot, you get better and better at what you are doing."

John Wooden, who won 10 titles in 12 Final Four appearances with UCLA, agrees with Knight 100 percent. "It's better to teach players a few things well than a lot of things poorly," says the Wizard of Westwood. "I just don't see how Dean Smith does it. I couldn't begin to teach that many things to a team. I couldn't even imagine trying to learn all those things as a player myself."

"If you teach players to do a few things well, you're more likely to gain consistency and play closer to your level of competence. That's why Knight's teams are more consistent than Smith's. That's why they will play better in a tournament game after game."

Tangled Up in X's and O's

By Smith's own admission, using multiple defenses hurts the performance of each individual defense. In fact, alternating, gambling defenses can confuse the defenders more than the offensive players. A defender may miss the defensive signal, or, when a switch occurs or a trap is broken, he may be unable to find the right man to cover. He may be so eager to steal the ball that he neglects his basic responsibilities. And in the turmoil of a gambling defense, defenders are less likely to be in position for rebounds.

Because pressing, switching and trapping—key elements of Smith's defensive

Jim Valvano: The Other Guy

The warnings sounded even before Jim Valvano accepted the head coaching job at North Carolina State. In the ACC, and especially in North Carolina, he was told, no one escapes the shadow of Dean Smith and his North Carolina Tar Heels. "No matter what you do there," he was cautioned by friends, "you'll be second fiddle to The Dean."

Valvano embraced the competition with enthusiasm. And the wisecracking Italian kid from the streets of New York was turned loose on the unsuspecting populace of North Carolina, long accustomed to the cool, systematic style of Dean Smith. In his first year on the job—after arriving from Iona College where he was 94-47 in five years—Valvano spoke at 120 stops on the pig-pickin' circuit, gaining 25 pounds (since lost) and counteracting distrust of his Yankee roots by sharing his sense of excitement about college basketball and N.C. State.

He's still at it, with a style that the home folks love. "What should I do about a painful knee?" a youngster asked Valvano on his radio call-in show. "Limp," Valvano answered. He enjoys poking fun at the awe in which ACC basketball coaches—particularly Smith—are held. "If I'm in a store somewhere, people look at me like, 'He shops!'"

Although Valvano unfailingly praises Smith's record, he is willing to make jokes at his rival's expense. He regales audiences with an uncannily accurate rendition of the kid-glove postgame treatment Smith receives, which he delightfully contrasts with the bare knuckle approach he gets. Valvano tells how Smith recruited 6-foot-10 high school all-America John Brownlee, whose father was Smith's teammate at Kansas. "Not to be outdone, I called my college roommate and I said, 'Hey, Bob, what's your son doing?' He said, 'He's in hairdressing school.'" Surely it is no



coincidence that Smith's systematized Tar Heels wear restrained sky blue, while Valvano's Wolfpack dresses in bright, bawdy red.

Last season, though often overmatched, his first State team remained spirited and competitive throughout a 14-13 season. This year, Valvano has come up with one of the surprise teams in the nation, off to a 12-2 start.

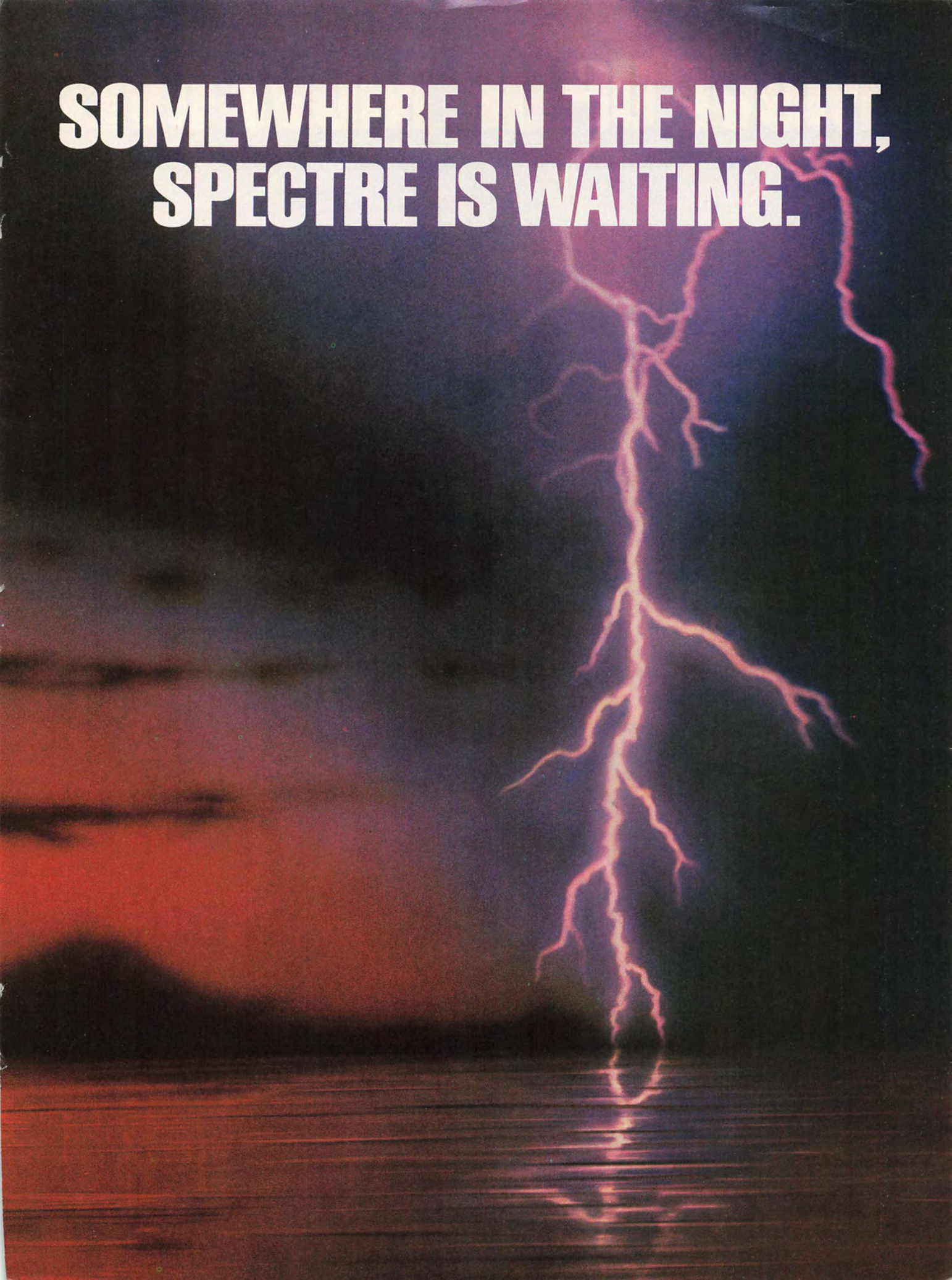
There are two all-ACC caliber players on the squad, 6-foot-11 forward Thurl Bailey, the team's leading scorer and rebounder, and 6-foot Sidney Lowe, a consummate point guard. Chuck Nevitt, a 7-foot-5 center, and Scott Parzych, 6 feet 7, join Bailey on the front line, with 6-foot Dereck Whittenburg teaming with Lowe. They and their coach are making themselves heard around the nation, and around North Carolina.

"Last year," Valvano recalls, "no one knew what to make of me coming down here and 'running my mouth.' Now I can go recruit anybody in the state and he'll know who I am and what we're trying to do here at State."

Which is—first and foremost—to beat Dean Smith.

—Barry Jacobs

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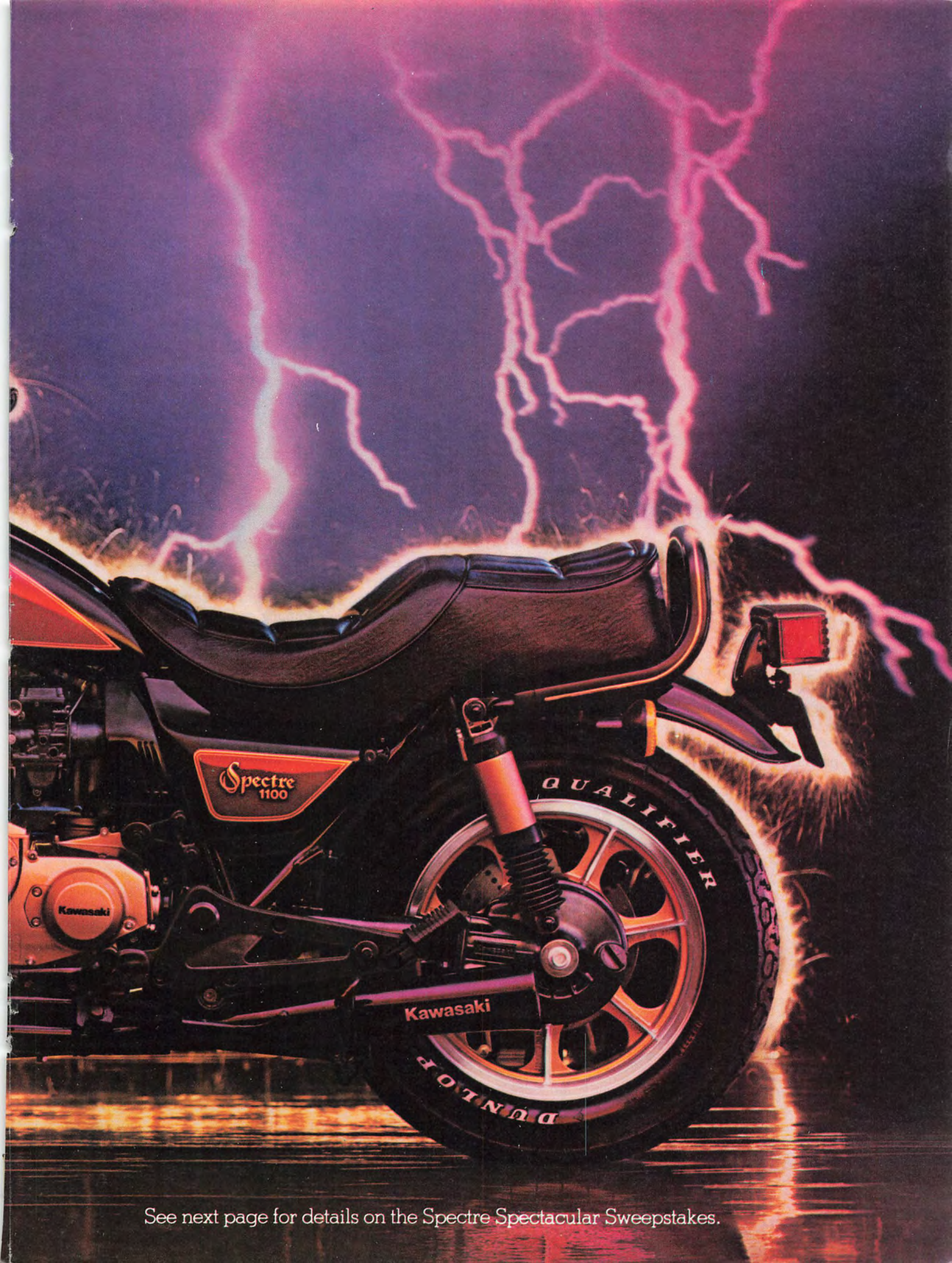
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See next page for details on the Spectre Spectacular Sweepstakes.

0 for 6; Oh, for 7

Dean Smith holds the record for most appearances by a coach in the Final Four without winning a national championship. In fact, as the record shows, Smith's teams usually haven't even come close, getting clobbered by the opposition in five of the six crucial games. Perhaps seven will be his lucky number.

1981

Second Round:

UNC 74, Pittsburgh 57

Regional Semifinals:

UNC 61, Utah 56

Regional Championship:

UNC 82, Kansas State 68

Final Four Semifinals:

UNC 78, Virginia 65

NCAA Championship:

Indiana 63, UNC 50

1977

First Round:

UNC 69, Purdue 66

Second Round:

UNC 79, Notre Dame 77

Regional Championship:

UNC 79, Kentucky 72

Final Four Semifinals:

UNC 84, Nevada-Las Vegas 83

NCAA Championship:

Marquette 67, UNC 59

1972

Second Round:

UNC 92, South Carolina 69

Regional Championship:

UNC 73, Pennsylvania 59

Final Four Semifinals:

Florida State 79, UNC 75

1969

Second Round:

UNC 79, Duquesne 78

Regional Championship:

UNC 87, Davidson 85

Final Four Semifinals:

Purdue 92, UNC 65

1968

Second Round:

UNC 91, St. Bonaventure 72

Regional Championship:

UNC 70, Davidson 66

Final Four Semifinals:

UNC 80, Ohio State 66

NCAA Championship:

UCLA 78, UNC 55

1967

Second Round:

UNC 78, Princeton 70 (overtime)

Regional Championship:

UNC 96, Boston College 80

Final Four Semifinals:

Dayton 76, UNC 62

In addition, North Carolina lost early round games to Syracuse in 1975, Alabama in 1976, San Francisco in 1978, Pennsylvania in 1979 and Texas A&M in 1980. On the other hand, they were 6-0 in regional title games.

schemes—can quickly exhaust defenders, UNC needs a ready troop of reserves. But Smith's system is so demanding that it can take years before a player is experienced enough to execute it well. It is not surprising that Smith says, "Almost all my players have their best years as seniors."

When a well-drilled opponent beats Carolina's pressure defense consistently,

Smith's entire game plan can go into the shredder. If the Tar Heels' defense can't force turnovers or misses, their offense can't fast break for high-percentage shots. And if UNC falls behind, their opponent can slow the tempo on offense, and sag into the middle on defense to make Carolina shoot from outside.

Defensive breakdowns are rare during the regular season when UNC plays me-

diocre teams or strong teams not yet humming on all cylinders. But in post-season play, the Tar Heels have to face teams who are peaking, playing their most confident ball of the year. And as former Marquette coach Al McGuire warns, "Even early in tournaments you normally are going to find teams who have the patience to adjust and handle the pressure of changing defenses." The

Who Can Beat the Tar Heels?

Come NCAA tournament time, what kind of team can make Dean Smith's gambling defensive system come up a loser? Carolina can put away almost any team that is foolish enough to fast break with them. But the Tar Heels can flop badly against a good half-court passing offense.

If a team handles the ball surely, dribbles very little and passes crisply, it can beat Smith's attacking defenses for open shots inside. And, oh, are the Tar Heels notorious for giving up easy baskets. In an NCAA survey of 203 major college teams covering the 1970s, North Carolina ranked first in offensive field-goal percentage, but 119th in field-goal percentage allowed by defense.

In this year's tournament a number of teams—Louisville, Houston, Georgetown, Missouri and San Francisco—have the manpower to give UNC trouble. But a few would be special poison to the Tar Heels because they combine size with the ability to operate a controlled half-court offense:

Iowa. The Hawkeyes aren't physical, but they are quick and clever. Coach Lute Olson has them singing in unison, and their guards, especially the brilliant Kenny Arnold, should be able to keep the ball out of Carolina's clutches.

Indiana. The Hoosiers' Jimmy Thomas and Randy Wittman can protect the ball, and although their big men are young, Bobby Knight should have them

ready by March.

Minnesota. Seven-foot-two Randy Breuer is the mountain, and the most important foothill is 6-foot-5 sharpshooter Trent Tucker. On a good day their zone defense can shut Carolina down. They did last year by 16 points.

Kentucky. Though the Wildcats lost to Carolina in December, Sam Bowie's anticipated return from the injured list could make the difference. Swift point guard Dirk Minniefield will see that everyone gets the ball.

Virginia. Coach Terry Holland knocked off Smith twice last year. He also has awesome Ralph Sampson and speedy small men whose outside shooting is better than anticipated. —A.S.

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NORTH CAROLINA

results have been Carolina defeats.

Smith has accepted each loss stoically. After his bitterest one, to Marquette and McGuire in 1977, he calmly wandered around the lockerroom, passing out soft drinks, thanking and consoling his players. In a classic comment on the vicissitudes of coaching, he has said, "If you make every game a life-and-death thing, you're going to have problems. You'll be dead a lot."

Will It Be Different This Year?

Settled in behind his desk, Smith has the relaxed air of a man who barely remembers past disappointments. His only evidence of nerves is that he chain-smokes as if he fears North Carolina might run out of tobacco.

He vigorously defends his defensive strategy: "Every coach has his way and I'm convinced ours is right for us. We give up some easy baskets but we make up a lot on the other end, and we don't send people to the foul line against us. By tournament time, offenses are better at adjusting to us, but we are better at executing, so that evens out.

"Other teams' defenses aren't *that* much less complicated than ours," he protests. "Knight says they only play man-to-man, but in one of our two games against them last year they played some zone against our guards. John Wooden used mostly man-to-man in the half-court, but he used a full-court zone press too. And he used a half-court zone against our delay offense in 1968."

As talk turns to the national championship, Smith's face stiffens. In two decades he has won those 436 games, an Olympic title, an NIT title, eight ACC Tournaments and six NCAA Regional titles; discussing his failures is like screeching fingernails on his blackboard.

"Of course I want us to win a championship," he says. "But winning once isn't the measure of a program's success. We've sustained our success for 20 years. A couple of dozen coaches have won national titles, but only one [John Wooden] has been to the Final Four more times than I have. Which is harder—to win once or to go as far as the Final Four six times?"

Smith has good reason to consider himself a winner; if there ever is a Mount Rushmore for basketball coaches, he surely will be granted a place on it. But

whether or not he can bring home a national championship is still as up in the air as any jump ball.

Still, 1982 could be Smith's year. Despite a short bench, the Tar Heels are loaded with talent. The starters are an ideal mix: spidery Sam Perkins at center, powerful James Worthy and heady Matt Doherty at the forwards, poised Jimmy Black at point guard and electrifying leaper Mike Jordan, a freshman, at the other guard. These players make up a smart, cohesive unit, with size and speed inside and a killer instinct.

After that killer instinct blew out Kentucky in the early season battle for the No. 1 ranking, Smith talked about his team's chances in the Final Four. "There are 25 teams that could win the national championship. We're one of them," he said modestly. North Carolina's chances should be better than that. Indeed, before betting against Smith, remember what UCLA fans said in 1963 about their coach, who hadn't won an NCAA title after 15 years on the job. "John Wooden," they concluded sadly, "just can't win the big one." ★

Arnold Schechter is a freelance writer based in New York City.

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THE AMERICANIZA

The NHL has been playing hockey in America for 65 years. But only now, from Massachusetts to Minnesota, are American players making an impact on the NHL.

BOBBY CARPENTER: PRIDE OF MASSACHUSETTS

by Gary Ronberg

Whether they played at the Capital Centre in Landover, Maryland, or on the road, it was always the same. The door to the Washington Capitals' clubhouse would swing open and the media would roll through in waves.

Bobby Carpenter, 18, of Peabody, Massachusetts, was a media event then.

He was the first U.S. kid to jump straight from high school to the National Hockey League, the one who had signed a three-year contract for \$600,000 with representatives from the White House and Congress looking on. Bobby Carpenter: "The Can't-Miss Kid" who not only would rescue the Capitals on the ice but at the ticket windows too.

That was several months ago, during Carpenter's first tour through the NHL.



ATION OF HOCKEY

Now Carpenter moves through airports, hotel lobbies and arenas like any other member of a losing team, which the Capitals still are. And although he still is a prospect bursting with potential, it may well be a few years before the prophecies are fulfilled. "Bobby's got all the skills, but his skills are raw now," says Ryan Walter, the captain of the Capitals. Adds Roger Crozier, Washington's GM: "I think Bobby's started to realize what's demanded before you can call yourself a pro."

Under the Microscope

The expectations. From himself.

From his father. From anyone who ever watched this 6-foot-1, 185-pound center tear up amateur tournaments throughout North America and Europe. It was soon after his father helped him lace up his first pair of skates that it became Carpenter's dream to play in the NHL. "I can still remember when I was young, playing a game one night and my father letting me sleep 'til noon the next day," he says. "I'd say, 'Gee Dad, I wish I could do this all my life.' And he'd say, 'Keep working and you will.'"

However, by the time Bobby was starting for St. John's Prep, in Danvers, Massachusetts, dreams of merely reaching the NHL were no longer enough. "It was my challenge to be the first," he says. "I wanted to be the first to make it right out of high school."

No high school player had ever been among the first 60 selections in the draft; no American at any level had ever been among the top 10. The Capitals gave Carpenter his chance by making him the third selection in the amateur draft.

That a boy from Massachusetts should emerge as the prime American prospect for NHL superstardom should have come as no surprise. Hockey, at all levels, is worshipped in Massachusetts almost as much as it is in Canada. "This area has always been in love with hockey, but it really took off when Bobby Orr and Derek Sanderson came to the Bruins in the Sixties," says Joe Yanetti, who coached Carpenter at St. John's Prep. "Every father and mother wanted their sons to be another Orr or Sanderson. You never met so many kids named Bobby or Derek."

In 1976, when Orr left the Bruins for the Chicago Black Hawks, a considerable amount of hockey interest disappeared with him. But in 1980, "The Miracle of Lake Placid" renewed interest in Boston-area hockey that has only been fueled further by the emergence of Carpenter as a potential NHL star.

"Now a kid playing two or three sports who might have passed up hockey is thinking twice about a career in the

game," says Boston Bruins GM Harry Sinden. "There's no doubt that Bobby's created lots of hopes for these kids."

Education of an 18-year-old

Had Bobby Carpenter been drafted by any of the NHL's elite, he would have been eased into the lineup or spent time in the minor leagues. But going into their eighth season, the Washington Capitals had yet to make the playoffs in a league where 16 of 21 teams do so every year. With an average age of 23, Washington is in fact the youngest team in the NHL. So Carpenter is getting his hockey education the hard way.

Carpenter's first lesson—in the insecurities of professional hockey—came when general manager Max McNab and coach Gary Green were fired after a prolonged losing streak in November. "What I've learned is that this is a business," he says now, "and because of the potential consequences, I guess that's why they pay you so much money."

On the ice, he has shown the strain of getting used to the grueling life of the NHL. "Bobby's had a little problem with his intensity level," says Crozier. "It's easy to get up for a high school rivalry 25 times a year. In the NHL, you've got to be up for 80 games a year."

Shortly after he became the Capitals' new coach last November, Bryan Murray moved Carpenter from his usual center-ice position to left wing. "I thought he was pressing, trying too hard to live up to his expectations," Murray says. "He'd leave the defensive zone early, looking for the long pass, or else he'd gamble in deep trying to force the play. On the wing, he started going to the net more and his defensive work improved."

But when Carpenter returned to center ice from left wing at the end of December, it was no cause for celebration: before almost 15,000 fans in the Capital Centre, Washington had been tied 4-4 by the New York Rangers in the final 76 seconds. The following night, the Caps' 3-2 loss to the Sabres in Buffalo left them virtually tied with Colorado for 21st place in the 21-team league. From a physical standpoint, Carpenter had not appeared out of his league in either game. With his size, he is an imposing figure who joins the flow of play with



PHOTOGRAPH BY JERRY WACHTER

Sometimes a lost boy on the ice, Carpenter can also check and deal like a savvy veteran.

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strong, purposeful strides.

There had been moments, though, when Carpenter looked uncertain of precisely where to go on the ice, and when. "He's a big bugger and he can shoot," notes John Van Boxmeer, Buffalo's veteran defenseman. "But he seems to be feeling the pressure, the losing too, and that can get to a kid. With that club, there's not much besides him, Walter, Dennis Maruk and Mike Gartner so far as scoring is concerned." (At the midway point of the season, Carpenter was fourth in Capital scoring with 14 goals and 19 assists.)

"Eighteen is very young for this league," adds Yvon Lambert, the veteran Sabre left wing. "Orr made it in his teens, so has Wayne Gretzky, but how many others have? With a kid 18 you've got to be very careful that by the time he's 22, 23, the game isn't playing with his head, eh?"

Carpenter has shown flashes of brilliance—he came back from those two disappointing games to star during a road trip to New York, scoring a game-

The Americans Are Coming

The number of U.S.-born players in the NHL has been rising over the past 10 seasons. And their goal-scoring is also picking up. Ten years ago, no American exceeded 20 goals. At the halfway point of the current season, four U.S.-born players—Mark Pavelich, Neal Broten, Bobby Carpenter and Dave Christian—were chasing 30-goal seasons.

1981-82 (at midseason)	1976-77	1971-72
Number of U.S.-born players in NHL		
46	33	14
Percentage of total NHL roster		
10.4%	6.8%	4.0%
Goals scored by U.S.-born players		
204	197	63
Percentage of total NHL scoring		
6.2%	4.1%	1.9%

winner against the Rangers. But his on-the-ice education continues. The opposition has come at Carpenter in various attempts to assess his moxie. "If they give you their stick, you gotta whack 'em back right away with yours," he says. "Then they'll skate away thinking, 'Oh, oh, maybe next time the kid'll do a number on me.'"

Obviously, until "The Can't-Miss Kid" makes it big, misses altogether or falls somewhere in between, the debate will linger. Should he have spent at least a year in college? Should he have started his pro career in the minor leagues? Is it, indeed, too great a leap from high school to the National Hockey League?

If anything, time is an ally for an 18-year-old. And at this time, Bobby Carpenter insists he is exactly where he belongs, playing hockey at night and sleeping 'til noon the next day. "If I had this to do all over again, I'd do it just the way I've done it," he says. "This is where I've wanted to be since I can remember. And now that I'm here, I'm not gonna blow it." ★

MINNESOTA: STATE OF THE ART

by Robin Finn

If Bobby Carpenter is the flower of American hockey, the Minnesota North Stars are the fruit. The North Stars have more American-born talent on their roster than any NHL team except the New York Rangers. And the North Stars are winning with it. They have spent most of this season battling with St. Louis for first place in the Norris Division after going to the Stanley Cup finals last year against the New York Islanders. It is no accident that they are winning with Americans, and it is no accident that they are doing it in Minnesota, the North Star State.

Carpenter is the product of one of America's two booming breeding grounds for hockey players, New England. The other ground is even more productive—fully half of the members of the 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team were from Minnesota, as are about 40 percent of the Americans in the NHL today.

"When we were in last place four years ago," says Lou Nanne, the innovative general manager of the North Stars since 1977, "we took a chance on some Americans, and I think our improved showing, plus the United States'



Minnesotan Steve Christoff shines for the North Stars.

Olympic victory, cast a spotlight on American players in general and on this area of the country in particular. Consequently, today Minnesota is scouted as heavily as any province in Canada."

Two of Nanne's Americans have proved to be stars. Fifteen years ago, Steve Christoff was alone in his fourth-grade class when he declared his intention to play in the NHL when he grew up. Most kids in South Minneapolis who thought about sports thought about skiing and football. Christoff thought about hockey, went on to play forward for Herb Brooks at the University of Minnesota and on the 1980 Olympic team, and joined the North Stars after having been the 24th selection in the 1978 draft. Last year he scored 16 points in 18 games in the playoffs for the North Stars.

Neal Broten followed Christoff to the University of Minnesota, and to the North Stars. Playing in his first full season in the NHL, he is emerging as a player as valuable to the team as Bobby Smith or Steve Payne or Dino Ciccarelli, according to Nanne. He scored more goals, assists and points in the first half of the season than any American rookie before him and is a leading candidate for Rookie of the Year. Broten, and his

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brother Aaron, who plays for the Colorado Rockies, grew up in Roseau, in extreme north Minnesota, and dreams of the NHL came naturally to him. "Hockey is the thing to do in Roseau," he says. "Of course, there wasn't much else to do all winter."

Evolution of the Species

In the beginning, American players were criticized by NHL scouts for being inferior to Canadians as skaters, mostly due to lack of experience. Today's U.S. college-produced players skate on a par with their Canadian Junior Hockey rivals, and in fact may be more adept at exploiting their skating skills. In college hockey there is no red line, which means fewer offsides penalties, longer lead passes and a more wide-open style of play than in the NHL or junior hockey. As a result, the game is faster and less physical. This makes college players better suited to the fast, patterned European style of play now in vogue in the NHL.

The American affinity for European hockey was dramatically evident in the play of the Olympic hockey team, coached by Herb Brooks, now with the Rangers and himself a product of the American college game. The differences between Americans and Canadians are diminishing, and talent and experience will determine a player's value more than stereotypical differences in style.

By midseason, the juniors still had the corner on the market in producing NHL players: 371 compared to 59 from U.S. colleges. But with more NHL club executives coming from the college ranks—Hartford's Larry Pleau, the Rangers' Brooks and Craig Patrick, the Islanders' Bill Torrey, Chicago's Keith Magnuson, Winnipeg's Tom Watt, Vancouver's Harry Neale and Minnesota's Nanne and Glen Sonmor—who are familiar with that talent pool, the ratio is slowly beginning to shift.

Reaping the Harvest

Lou Nanne, himself a graduate of the University of Minnesota, is to a great extent personally responsible for the growing trend among NHL executives to judge talent without respect to the player's citizenship. For the past four years, while he was building the North Stars into an NHL power, he had the shrewd good sense to scour his own neighborhood for bargains before looking to Canada. He picked up Christoff and Broten

as second-round draft selections; last spring half of the North Stars' 14 draft picks were Americans, and four of them are freshmen at the University of Minnesota: Tom Hirsch, Dave Preuss, Jim Malwitz and Scott Bjugstad.

But the bargains, Nanne sighs, have become a thing of the past. It was only a matter of time before other GMs caught

on and stopped passing by American talent in the early rounds of a draft. "I'm not going to be able to steal any more players in the draft," says Nanne, who had seven Americans on his midseason roster (the Rangers had eight). "Everybody's got their eyes on them now. I'd say that Americans are going to be taking up 30 to 35 percent of the draft

The Miracle: Can It Happen Again?

It seems like it was only yesterday that a bunch of little-known amateur hockey players became overnight national heroes. Craig, Christoff, Christian, Silk, Morrow, Johnson, Eruzione. They were members of the United States Olympic hockey team, the cast of the Miracle of Lake Placid. In two years another group of players will try for the Miracle, Part II, at the 1984 games in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia. Only the Russians, Czechs, Finns, Swedes, Canadians and West Germans stand in their way.

Can the U.S. hockey team do it again? The legacy of 1980 will surely help. "I think it can happen again. The impact Lake Placid had on youth hockey and college hockey in this country is unbelievable," says Lou Lamoriello, coach at Providence College. "We'll have a good team in 1984," agrees Bob Johnson, coach of defending NCAA champion Wisconsin. "There are a lot of good young American players available."

The question is whether these players will still be available in two years; the NHL is interested in them too. The 1984 team will be drawn, for the most part, from current college freshmen and

sophomores and a few blue-chippers now in high school. Bobby Carpenter of the Washington Capitals and Aaron Broten, formerly of the University of Minnesota but now of the Colorado Rockies, would have been naturals, but they turned professional. Other top college underclassmen—such as goalkeeper Marc Behrend, defenseman Chris Chelios and left wing Brian Mullen of champion Wisconsin—have already been drafted by NHL teams.

The Olympic squad will be chosen at the 1983 National Sports Festival in Los Angeles, when 80 of the top amateur players in the country will be brought together. The coach will probably be named this spring.

The 1984 team will face one obstacle unknown to the Lake Placid team: Sarajevo is definitely not home ice. "Playing in Europe is very difficult. The Russians will have an advantage there," says Lou Vairo, who coaches the U.S. National Junior team. "Right now it doesn't look like there will be a repeat. But if most of the good talent remains eligible, anything is possible." Even another miracle.

—Stephen Steiner



market in the next five years.”

Nanne is in a particularly good position to harvest the best of American hockey, however, because of his close relationship—by personal history and by zip code—to the University of Minnesota. Six times in the last 10 years, the Gophers of Minnesota have gone to the NCAA hockey championship game and three times they have won it. Most of that distinguished history was made under Herb Brooks. And for most of that time, few in the NHL cared.

“It used to be that we’d have no scouts at our games,” says Brad Buetow, who succeeded Brooks as coach and led the Gophers to the championship game last year (which they lost). “But these days there are at least half a dozen scouts at every game. I’d say there’s been a 40 to 50 percent increase in overall campus scouting in the last five years.” The school has produced 27 pros in the last seven years, more than any other college. “Now if a kid plays well for us, that means he’s going to play well in the NHL,” says Buetow. “It’s good that our American players are being taken seriously, but it makes you a little insecure when you’re trying to build your college team.”

Planting the Seeds

That would have been an insecurity devoutly to be wished for by John Mariucci, who coached at Minnesota for 15 years beginning in 1952, and was the man, according to Lou Nanne, “who did more for American hockey than anybody else.” Mariucci today is an assistant GM for the North Stars. In his career at Minnesota he coached Nanne, as well as Herb Brooks, University of Wisconsin coach Bob Johnson and Notre Dame coach Lefty Smith.

Mariucci instituted the university’s policy of concentrating on Minnesota’s talent and limiting Canadian participants on the team to one per year. “I told the university you’ll never get your own oak tree until you plant the acorn,” Mariucci recalls, “and that if we did our own planting, someday we’d have a program second to none. And we’d do it through the school system.”

Mariucci played for the Chicago Black Hawks in the Forties and was the first American-born team captain in the NHL. (It would be 30 years before there would be a second.) When he retired, Mariucci became the Johnny Appleseed of American hockey. He proselytized all over Minnesota, beseeching high school

athletic departments to build hockey programs. When he began his campaign of promoting hockey in Minnesota in the early Fifties, there were three hockey rinks in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Now there are 40, and there are 140 indoor rinks across the state serving over 150 high schools.

Those seeds bore fruit, in the form of the powerful University of Minnesota teams, in the forms of Christoff and Broten and the North Stars, and in the now-green forms of players like Rick Erdell. An 18-year-old freshman at the University of Minnesota, Erdell is billed by the school as the “best player not taken in the NHL draft.” He developed as a player in South Minneapolis while rooting for Christoff and the Brotens at Minnesota. “Today,” says Buetow, “people here can look at a Steve Christoff and they see something to shoot for, a local hero, something for the kids to emulate. Other local hockey programs find an incentive to improve.”

“No doubt about it, we’ve become a breeding ground for hockey.” ★

Gary Ronberg is a reporter for the Philadelphia Inquirer. Robin Finn writes about hockey for the Minneapolis Star.

Dave Christian: Winning Hearts in Winnipeg

Perhaps the finest young American hockey player in the NHL is playing in, of all places, Winnipeg, Canada—and doing nicely, thank you.

Dave Christian, originally of Warroad, Minnesota, late of the Winnipeg Jets, is not fast, nor does he possess a fearsome shot; Christian simply has a talent for winning. At age 22, he has won wherever he has laced on skates: an NCAA conference title while at the University of North Dakota, an Olympic gold medal in Lake Placid in 1980. Last season, his first in the NHL, Christian led Winnipeg in scoring with 28 goals and 43 assists. This year, now captain of the Jets, he had led them to 16 wins by midseason—seven more than all of last year—and a shot at the playoffs.

“You can count on one hand the number of guys in the NHL who are as complete hockey players as David is,” says John Ferguson, the Winnipeg general manager who drafted Christian in the second round of the 1979 amateur draft.



“David was a boy I wanted to build my team around.”

When Bill Nyrop of Washington, D.C. arrived in Montreal as a rookie in 1975 he felt “like a Martian or something. The media and fans looked at me like I was green and purple,” recalls Nyrop, now with Minnesota. Dave Christian has gotten a far different kind of reception in Winnipeg. Warroad, where David learned his hockey from his father, Billy—a member of the 1960 Olympic gold medal team—is but a two-hour drive from Winnipeg; Christian is practically a hometown boy.

Could Dave Christian turn out to be the best American player in the history of the NHL? “I really don’t think of it in those terms,” he says. “I think too much is made of the whole American-Canadian deal in the first place. Can the guy play hockey or can’t he? That’s all that really matters.” Dave Christian, as the fans in Canada will tell you, *can* really play. —Richard Dessau

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Three years ago, there was no such thing as the Big East. Today, it's one of the top basketball conferences in America.

by Don Markus

The red-brick building at 321 South Main Street is like so many others in the College Hill section of Providence, Rhode Island. The outside is a reminder of the past, retaining much of its post-Revolutionary charm. The inside is a hint of the future, containing offices from which dreams and schemes swirl out into the mid-winter afternoon. A small sign hangs off the front of 321 South Main: Veterans' Administration, 2nd floor. No mention is made of the occupants on the fifth floor, the penthouse.

There, in a corner office, a stocky man with short brown hair, sharp wit and great vision sits with his back to a wide picture window. But even without turning around, Dave Gavitt can see past the factory smoke that clouds the sky this day to a scene still months in the future, to a place called the Louisiana Superdome, to an event called the NCAA basketball championship. What Gavitt sees is almost as rare as Halley's Comet: an Eastern team playing for a national title. More precisely, a team that plays somewhere north of that famous intersection of Four Corners and Tobacco Road.

Should that happen, chances are the team will come from the Big East, a conference representing the major college basketball powers and geographic regions of the area—Villanova (Philadelphia), Boston College, Syracuse (upstate New York), St. John's (New York City), Seton Hall (New Jersey), Connecticut, Georgetown (Washington, D.C.) and Providence (Rhode Island)—a conference that Gavitt helped to found and of which he is commissioner, a conference that since its birth just three years ago

The Big East title, in a year of balance, is up for grabs.

THE BIG EAST

BASKETBALL COMES HOME

has emerged as one of the best and most balanced in the country.

In its first season, 1979-80, the Big East had two members, Syracuse and St. John's, in the Top 10 for most of the winter, and a third, Georgetown, that came within a Sleepy Floyd jump shot of the Final Four. In '80-81, six of the eight teams qualified for the NCAAs or the National Invitation Tournament.

This year, with two members starting out in the Top 20 (Georgetown, No. 5, and Villanova, No. 17), Big East teams rolled to a 61-14 record (.813) against non-conference teams in the opening months of the season. The biggest surprises in the league, though, were two teams expected to finish down near the bottom. St. John's, going through a "re-construction era," according to coach Lou Carnesecca, went 9-1 in the 1981 half of this season, including a sweep of the Holiday Festival at Madison Square Garden (Villanova beat defending NCAA champ Indiana before succumbing to the Redmen in the final). Seton Hall, 11-16 overall last year, lost coach Bill Raftery a few days before the season opener, and then proceeded to win nine of its first 10 games, losing only to then No. 2-ranked Kentucky.

In its first two years, the Big East was known as a coaches' conference, a league whose programs and prestige centered around the colorful personalities of Carnesecca, Dr. Tom Davis of Boston College, John Thompson of Georgetown, Rollie Massimino of Villanova and Syracuse's Jim Boheim, who, behind Jerry Tarkanian of Nevada-Las Vegas, has the winningest record of all active Division I basketball coaches. But now it is also a league of established and burgeoning stars. Names like Pat Ewing of Georgetown, John Bagley of Boston College and

Corny Thompson of Connecticut are but a sampling of the homegrown talent who elected to stay East and build a strong conference. The Big East has also attracted standouts like Otis Thorpe (Providence) from Florida and Erich Santifer and Leo Rautins (Syracuse) from Michigan and Ontario, Canada.

In college basketball, success breeds success. In the spring of 1981, 10 of the top 13 high school players in the East elected to stay close by choosing the Big East. Many selected the conference over the Big Ten and the Atlantic Coast Conference, like New Yorkers Chris Mullin and Bill Wennington of St. John's. Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski had his eye on both of them. "Don't even talk to me about the Big East," he says.

The intense recruiting competition has carried over into the conference itself. Says St. John's assistant coach Ron Rutledge, "Before, if you lost a player, he'd at least go off to another area. Now he stays around and ends up in the Big East, playing against you."

As Dave Gavitt predicted in 1979 when the new league was formed, "The Big East has selected teams with great basketball traditions and large media markets, and we believe we have an opportunity to keep the best players home." All of this has come to pass (and run and shoot and dunk), why not Gavitt's dream of Eastern NCAA contention?

For one thing, it has been 27 years since LaSalle beat Bradley for the NCAA championship, almost three decades of cruel jokes, one-sided playoff losses and long summers. "Quite a while," Dave Gavitt concedes this day in

A Ewing named Pat has won Georgetown high ratings.



Providence, "but I think we're ready to win. If people ask, 'Can an Eastern team win the NCAA?', that means something. It's been a while since a question like that was even asked."

The Dark Days

It is a chapter in the history of college basketball that will forever be remembered while trying to be forgotten. The Scandals of 1951, a series of fixed games that ruined the careers of several all-Americans and ultimately helped to ruin the basketball programs at several New York schools, sent Eastern basketball reeling from the pinnacle of the college game and crashing to the bottom. In 1949-50, CCNY was the only team ever to win both the NCAA and the NIT in the same year. Less than a decade later, City College was playing in the dim light of Division II. The NYU program went from dominant to dormant and only now is there serious talk about bringing the sport back.

"If the scandals didn't happen, I don't think basketball would've gone down in New York," says Frank McGuire, who played and coached at St. John's, and then built the famed Underground Railroad that took kids from the city playgrounds to the University of North Carolina. "Kids began to look out of town after that, and that helped build up college basketball around the country." Adds Texas coach Abe Lemons, "New York kids would go anywhere just to get out of the city. And the New York teams wouldn't play outside the city, they were happy to stay on the subway."

There were factors besides the scandals that helped put Eastern basketball out of the headlines and into the agate type. The rise of pro ball in cities like



Center John Pinone gives Villanova a leg up on the Big East competition.

New York, Boston and Philadelphia forced the college game onto the periphery; the lack of large arenas made the game seem small-time next to the palaces going up in the Midwest and South; finally, a player named Ferdinand Lewis Alcindor chose UCLA over St. John's, leading a migration that took until last winter to halt.

Eastern basketball remained competitive within the privacy of its home

courts, but elsewhere it became known as "Leaestern" basketball, as the rest of the country took great pleasure in watching the hicks beat the slicks. Tournament time was only for the masochists at heart. Of the four Eastern teams to make the NCAA Final Four since 1970, only one played for the championship. (Even then, Villanova, which lost to UCLA, was forced to vacate second place because its star player, Howard Porter, had already signed a pro contract.) Easterners won "their tournament," the NIT, only twice in the last 10 years.

But Dave Gavitt has been proven a man of vision, and what he has seen is not for his eyes only. A gradual shift in power has been going on for quite a while—first away from UCLA and Pauley Pavillion in the mid-Seventies, and then a nationwide balancing out of talent with the decision of many blue-chippers to stay close to home. The SEC, the Pac-10, the Missouri Valley Conference as well as the Big East have all begun chipping away at the dominance of the ACC and the Big Ten, and there is a promise being heard from the Carrier Dome in Syracuse to the Villanova 'Cat-house: "The East will rise again."

A League Is Born

The Big East was not exactly drawn up on the checkered tablecloth of Dante's Italian restaurant in Jamaica, Queens, but it was there that the conference got its start. Dave Gavitt, the former coach and current athletic director at Providence, and Jack Kaiser, athletic director at St. John's, called the first Big East meeting there in the summer of 1979. Also seated around the table were Lou Carnesecca, John Thompson and Frank Riezo, athletic director at George-

The East Is Not Least

The Big East is the fourth best conference in the U.S., says computer expert Jeff Sagarin, an MIT graduate and doctoral student at Indiana University. His system ranks all 273 Div. I teams numerically; an ideal team would approach or even ex-

ceed the 100 mark. Conference strength is determined by averaging the ratings of the member teams. He has also ranked the top 10 leagues for internal balance and measured the Big East teams against each other, as of January 1982.

The Ten Best

Conference	Avg. Team Strength
1. Atlantic Coast	85.67
2. Big Eight	84.30
3. Southwest	83.87
4. Big East	83.50
5. SEC	83.21
6. Pac-10	82.61
7. Big 10	82.09
8. Metro	82.05
9. WAC	80.61
10. Missouri Valley	80.49

Ten Best Balanced

Conference
1. SEC
2. Big East
3. WAC
4. Southwest
5. Big Eight
6. Missouri Valley
7. Metro
8. Pac-10
9. Big 10
10. Atlantic Coast

Best in the East

Team	Individual Rating	National Ranking
1. Villanova	89.67	17th
2. Georgetown	87.39	24th
3. St. John's	86.15	32nd
4. Syracuse	84.92	40th
5. UConn	84.52	46th
6. Boston College	82.37	69th
7. Seton Hall	79.46	100th
8. Providence	73.54	184th

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Tall trees blocking out the sun.
It's 13 speeds in an overdrive gearbox.

And a CB handle
when you've got the country music turned off.

The road to Raleigh is a man
who gets up when he wants to...

goes to bed when he says.

Pushes himself to the limit
and then relaxes with gusto.

He doesn't give a damn what you think.

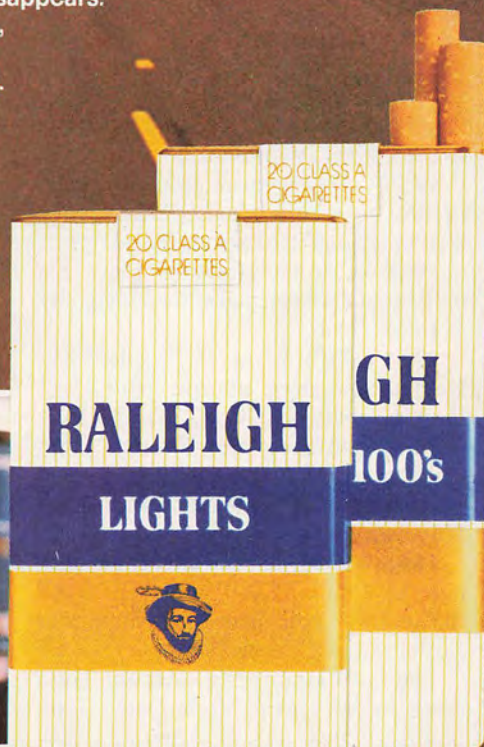
The road to Raleigh has
the feel of hard rain
and blowin' snow.

The light of a rising sun,
the pale of a pea soup fog.
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And the stench of diesel fuel.

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It's got freedom.

It's got the flavor you can only get
When you're on the road to Raleigh.



Take the road to flavor.

A Cast of Characters

The rapid improvement of Big East teams has shifted attention away from the sidelines and onto the court. But keep your eye on this colorful and successful bunch of coaches.

Lou Carnesecca, St. John's.

The Don of the Big East coaches is known for his chair-kicking sideline antics, but his teams are always under control. "Our league is the toughest in the country. Others may have two or three toughies, but the rest is scungilli."

John Thompson, Georgetown.

"One of the top five coaches in the

country," says ESPN's Dick Vitale. Thompson changes defenses constantly and commands the respect of his players: "We are not running a democracy here."

Jim Boeheim, Syracuse.

Known as "the Professor," for his scholarly look and analytical approach, he is a fierce competitor. He likes to apply the pressure with full-court zone defenses and an aggressive transition game.

Tom Davis, Boston College.

"Talk about zone pressure," says Vitale, "you just don't want to play BC

up at Roberts Centre." The good doctor (PhD in sports history) was the Big East Coach of the Year in '80-81.

Rollie Massimino, Villanova.

The Wildcats have averaged 20 wins for six years with "Daddy Mass." His emotional intensity shows in his teams' aggressive man-to-man defense.

Dom Perno, Connecticut.

"Everyone leaves him for last," says Dick Vitale. "The guy wins 20 games every year, but you never hear his name." His players, even Corny Thompson, keep an equally low profile.

town. "I had my doubts," the 44-year-old Gavitt remembers now. "I didn't know if I could get schools that had been independent for so long to go for it." Recalls Kaiser, "The NCAA was telling us that we had to play the teams they wanted us to. The answer finally was to form a conference."

By Memorial Day, the Big East was ready to come off the blackboard into reality. The independent seven (Providence, St. John's, Georgetown, Seton Hall, Syracuse, Connecticut and Boston College) formed the new league, and Villanova left the Eastern Eight to join

the fold a year later.

The next project for Gavitt, his associate commissioner, Mike Tranchese, and director of communications, Tom McElroy, was getting media attention, a task they have pulled off with aplomb. They negotiated a total of 168 televised appearances by Big East teams this season, including five national telecasts and a regular Wednesday night package on ESPN. It will mean around \$2 million to the eight schools this year. The league has also received a three-year commitment from Madison Square Garden to host the postseason tournament begin-

ning in 1983. More important than the revenue from these projects for the schools right now is the exposure. "A few years ago a high school kid might never have seen a college team from the East," says Georgetown's Thompson. "Now he can see for himself and make an intelligent decision when it comes to choosing schools."

Martin Clark, a sophomore forward, got letters from 400 schools before choosing Boston College. "The Big East has a lot to do with it," he says. "It helps to have the media exposure."

The Big East has not been without its

Stars of the East: Those Who Strayed . . . Those Who Stayed

After the scandals of 1951, Eastern basketball players wouldn't stay home for love or you-know-what. Here are some of the most wanted fugitives.

1955—Wilt Chamberlain goes from Overbrook High School in Philadelphia to the University of Kansas.

1959—Art Heyman, from Rockville Centre, New York, chooses Duke. They later lure Gene Banks from Philadelphia.

1960—Connie Hawkins plays his only year of college ball at the University of Iowa.

1961—Rick Barry of Roselle Park, New Jersey, starts putting them up at the University of Miami, Florida. Billy Cunningham goes from Erasmus High in Brooklyn to North Carolina, joining Larry Brown. Charlie Scott and Mitch Kupchak follow.

1965—Lew Alcindor chooses UCLA over St. John's. The Bruins compound the felony 15 years later by spiriting Rod Foster out of Connecticut.

1969—Washington's Mackin High sends Austin Carr to Notre Dame. John Shumate (New Jersey), Adrian Dantley

(Maryland) and Kelly Tripucka (New Jersey) are other Eastern all-Americans at South Bend.

1972—Gus Williams, of Mount Vernon, N.Y., goes to USC. Brother Ray later goes to Minnesota.

1974—Marquette's Al McGuire gets Butch Lee, New York's No. 1 player. Other stars at Marquette's New York point guard spot are Dean Meminger and Sam Worthen.

1975—Bernard King follows Ernie Grunfeld from New York to Tennessee. In 1978, Albert takes the road Len Elmore took down to Maryland.

When Patrick Ewing of Cambridge, Massachusetts, the No. 1 high school prospect of 1981, announced that he'd be playing for Georgetown, he may have signalled the end of the Eastern basketball exodus. More and more of the stars that rise in the East are staying there, due in part to the success of the Big East.

GEORGETOWN

Pat Ewing is living up to his notices and the Hoyas also have Fred Brown of the

Bronx playing the point.

VILLANOVA

Stewart Granger from Brooklyn is the point guard, and freshman Ed Pinckney is the New York forward. The leading scorer and rebounder the last two years has been John Pinone, from Connecticut.

CONNECTICUT

UConn has an awesome, in-state front line of Corny Thompson, Chuck Aleksinas and Mike McKay, all seniors.

ST. JOHN'S

The Redmen are led by 6-foot-6 junior David Russell of Bellport, N.Y. Freshman guard Chris Mullin from Brooklyn was MVP in the Holiday Festival.

BOSTON COLLEGE

Junior guard John Bagley of Bridgeport, Connecticut was the Big East's scoring leader and Player of the Year in 1980-81.

SETON HALL

Homegrown Jerseyite Dan Callandrillo led the conference in scoring two years ago. Six-foot-nine senior Howard McNeil has played at center, forward and guard for the Pirates.

critics or its faults; one blemish materialized last summer when a grand jury in New York found former BC player Rick Kuhn and three others guilty of fixing games during the 1978-79 season, the year before the Big East was established. But because of the timing and because of its cohesiveness, what Gavitt calls "the spirit of competition while working toward the same goal," the league survived unscathed. The Big East is refreshingly free of backbiting; coaches do not name their dogs after their colleagues, as did Virginia's Terry Holland (Hint: the dog's initials are D.S.).

Resentment does arise, however, in some Eastern circles over the publicity the league has received—the *New York Post* ran an eight-part epic on the Big East before this season—and rival coaches point to the weak non-conference schedules that teams like BC and Villanova play. But in the next breath, they credit the conference for restoring the long-lost image of good Eastern basketball. "I think it's helped the rest of us in terms of recruiting," says Fordham coach Tom Penders. "It came around at the right time."

The planned move of Pittsburgh from the Eastern Eight to the Big East next season has raised some cynical eyebrows. Back in September, the Panthers seemed ready to join Penn State in a new Eastern football league and pull two of the Big East teams with Division I football programs, Syracuse and BC, along for the ride. Instead, Gavitt persuaded Pitt to remain an independent football power and tie their basketball fortunes to the Big East, further strengthening the league's media potential.

Gavitt's vision doesn't include any further expansion; better is more important than bigger right now. "I wouldn't rule it out," he says, "but I don't think it will be immediate." However, the imminent collapse of the Eastern Eight could bring Rutgers into the picture, giving the Big East a strong team and access to the new Byrne Meadowlands Arena.

But for now, Gavitt is more concerned with access to the Superdome and a place in the Final Four. The dreams continue to grow on the fifth floor of 321 South Main Street in Providence, and outside of Dave Gavitt's window is an apparition that seems even rarer than Halley's Comet: an Eastern team winning the national championship. "It's coming," says Gavitt. "I can see it now." ★

Don Markus is a sportswriter for The Record in Bergen County, New Jersey.

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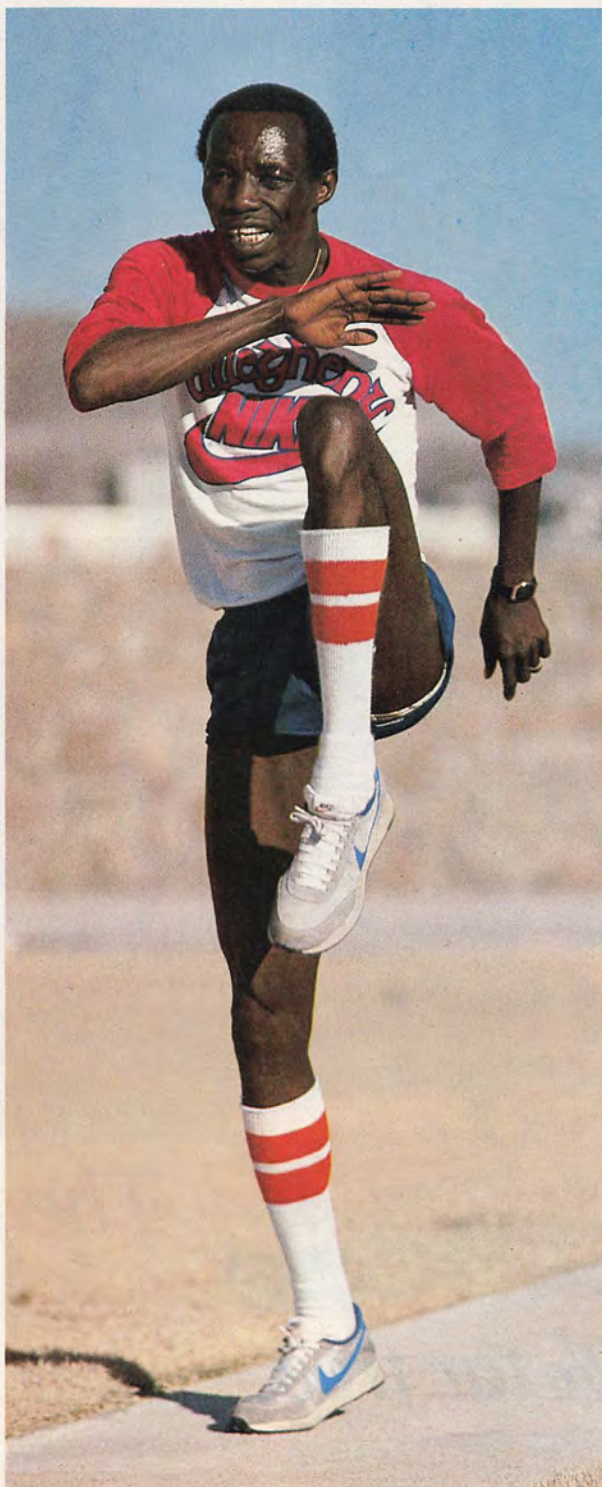
Not Texans. Kenyans, Britons and Tanzanians are the reasons UT-El Paso and SMU will finish 1-2 in this month's championships.

by Dave Rosner

Right away, Ted Banks sensed he was going to have trouble. His first sight of El Paso, the West Texas town on the Mexican border, was shocking enough, especially for someone who preferred his sand on the beach rather than on the desert. Banks thought about heading back to California. And if the new track coach himself felt that way, how was he ever going to sell the University of Texas at El Paso to top high school recruits?

It did not take long to find out. Banks had been at UTEP only a few months in the spring of 1973 when he went after three hot recruits, including two who would later become NCAA champions. He came up empty, losing them to the powers of collegiate track—UCLA, Southern Cal and Tennessee. What's worse, he had exhausted most of his recruiting budget in the chase. "I panicked," Banks says today. "I thought, 'Hey, I gotta get some people. They want a track program here.'"

The solution? Banks developed some leads through Kenyans already competing for American colleges, opened a pipeline overseas and started importing a steady stream of African distance runners. Before long, he had the dominant team in collegiate sports. Last year, with every point scored by an import, Banks' Miners won their fourth NCAA outdoor



Distance star Nyambui steps into a running controversy.

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track and field championship, their sixth title indoors and their sixth in cross-country. The only thing they have lost over the past three years, it seems, is an assistant coach.

That assistant was Ted McLaughlin, who left UTEP for the head coaching job at Southern Methodist in 1979, and immediately sensed he, too, was going to have trouble. Sure, he had a freshman named Michael Carter, history's finest high school shot putter, waiting for him in Dallas. In addition, two future collegiate record-holders—triple jumper Keith Connor of England and hammer

thrower Richard Olsen of Norway—followed him from UTEP. But at a small school with a large tuition, McLaughlin couldn't afford to make a mistake.

Taking advantage of the foreign contacts he developed during his four years in El Paso, McLaughlin reached overseas to add the few big scorers who made SMU into what the folks in West Texas took to calling "Son of UTEP." Last year, with more than two-thirds of their points coming from foreign students, the Mustangs placed second indoors and out, a dramatic improvement after placing 20th in 1980.

The same route to track and field success was open to Tom Tellez when he arrived in Houston six years ago. The Cougars coach certainly had the connections, he even had a letter of intent on his desk ready to be signed by a pretty fair Kenyan distance runner. But he just couldn't put aside his reservations. "I looked at that letter and said, 'Wait a second here, this is not what I'm about.' I'm one of the Olympic coaches, I'm involved in development." So Tellez crumpled the letter and air mailed it to the garbage can by his desk.

What Tellez had thrown away was a

NCAA Indoor Track and Field Preview

The Main Events: Races, Records and Rivalries

The NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championships are being held March 12 and 13 at the Silverdome in Pontiac, Michigan. The team race shapes up with a familiar look: UTEP leading, SMU sticking close, with Houston, Villanova and Tennessee a few paces back. Here are the key events to watch.

World's Fastest Rivalry

60-yard dash: Houston teammates Carl Lewis and Stanley Floyd will make the sprints look like a family affair. Floyd, the world's No. 1 sprinter two years ago as an Auburn freshman, is out to lower his year-old world record of 6.04 seconds. "And if I don't break it," he says calmly, "Carl's going to do it, because he'll be right there with me." Defending NCAA indoor champion Lewis, the current No. 1 courtesy of his 10.00 hundred meters last spring, has clocked a 6.06 in the 60-yard dash. Both have sought to play down the rivalry. "It doesn't matter which one of us wins it," says Floyd, "as long as we're one and two." If the two Houston speedsters should somehow falter, watch out for a stocky guy from Georgia named Walker on the outside; he knows how to run.

Villanova Goes the Distance Against UTEP

The Mile: UTEP's Suleiman Nyambui of Tanzania, looking for his record 12th NCAA title, should make it a record four straight in the mile. The strongest competition should come from 1980 runnerup Ross Donoghue, trying to follow in the footsteps of the legendary Villanova milers (Delaney, Liquori, Coghlan, Maree).

Will More Records Fall for Carl Lewis?

Jumps (horizontal): These jumps are



Stanley Floyd (left): he may be the world's fastest human.

controlled by the world indoor record holders. Carl Lewis is personally responsible for putting the "long" back in long jump, with his 28-foot, 1-inch record indoors and his 28-foot, 3½-inch jump outdoors (the second farthest outdoor jump of all-time).

SMU's Keith Connor of England should defend his triple jump crown handily, especially if he improves on his year-old 56-foot, 9½-inch world record.

The Highest Level of Competition

High Jump: Rivals since high school days in Indiana, Navy's Leo Williams and Alabama's Jeff Woodard square off in what should be an extraordinarily close duel. Woodard, the American indoor record holder at 7 feet, 7¾ inches, was red-shirted last year. Williams, the defending indoor and outdoor cham-

pion, is "vastly improved" since they last met, according to Woodard. Williams took first at the World University Games at Bucharest (7 feet, 4½), was the IC4A champion indoors and out, and set a stadium record at last year's NCAA championships in Baton Rouge. He holds every Naval Academy record for the high jump.

The Grand Finale

Mile Relay: In the mile relay, Seton Hall may have a tough time defending its title against Tennessee and SMU. The Mustangs are strengthened this year by the addition of Swedish 400-meter record holder Eric Josjo.

And, when all the points are tallied up at the NCAA Indoor Championships, it'll be one of those teams from Texas still on top.

shot at the national championship. Not until Carl Lewis—a long jumper and sprinter of such magnitude that he surely must be the reincarnation of Jesse Owens—stumbled upon Houston three years ago, could Tellez even conceive of last year's seventh place NCAA finish outdoors and fifth indoors. And this year Tellez has even begun to think about challenging his Texas adversaries for the national title.

The International Debate

How fitting that the Lone Star State, once a nation unto itself, should represent a microcosm of the controversial national trend in collegiate track and field. These three Texas powers are each taking different directions toward the same finish line—one with virtually all foreign athletes, another with a blend of foreigners and Americans, the other with all American athletes but one.

Tellez does not begrudge those who have built their programs overseas, but not every coach is as magnanimous about the foreign influx. UCLA track coach Jim Bush, whom Tellez assisted for eight years, is among them. "I couldn't live with myself if I neglected my own people here and brought in somebody who's already world-class just to win," Bush says. "I'm not sure some of the alumni are real happy about my policy, but I've just told them that there's no way we'll ever win a national title, we're just trying to do a job as teachers and educators."

Bush used to recruit some foreign athletes—UCLA won three straight NCAA titles with them during the early Seventies—but he stopped when the NCAA imposed the 14-scholarship limit on teams in 1976. Even when he was still winning with a handful of foreigners, Bush had begun lobbying for their exclusion from the national championship. "That would halt the foreign recruiting so fast," he says, "that some people would get whiplash."

The foreign athletes have heard it before, all the talk about how they are robbing Americans of scholarships and opportunities. "No matter where you went," Ted McLaughlin says of his UTEP days, "it was always, 'The Foreign Legion's coming.'" And there's little question about what prompted the NCAA age legislation, under which an athlete who enrolls in college after his 20th birthday now loses one year of eligibility for each year he has previously competed in organized track and field competition.

"It makes you a bit sick, listening to



Carl Lewis: track's superstar.

The Next Jesse Owens

Three years ago, as a high school senior, Carl Lewis earned a berth in the Pan American Games and considerable notoriety before he had even begun his collegiate career. Now that his 28-foot, 3½-inch long jump has brought the gravity-defying 29-foot, 2½-inch jump of former Texas El Paso star Bob Beamon back down to earth, the notoriety has continued to grow. But then, Lewis fully expected to be the world's best long jumper.

What Carl Lewis did not expect was to become the world's fastest human. That took him precisely 10 seconds. Last May, Lewis sped 100 meters in 10.00, the third fastest time in history and the fastest ever at sea level. He was surprised, but not amazed, at his prowess in two different events. "I never felt it was that difficult to do them both," Lewis says.

As if to emphasize his point, the following month he won the Athletics Congress and NCAA double (long jump and sprint). The last athlete to accomplish that feat in the same year was Jesse Owens in 1936. At the World Cup in September, Lewis won the long jump, but because of a hamstring injury, had to ease off halfway through the 100 meters to a last-place finish. If nothing else, it proved that Carl Lewis is indeed human.

people talk about you like you're a mercenary," says SMU's Keith Connor, a 24-year-old junior from Slough, England. "A lot of foreign athletes are also here to receive an education. People think we're just commodities coming over here to perform a function." Coming to the United States seems to have paid off for Keith Connor, though. He placed fourth in the 1980 Olympics and set a world indoor record of 56 feet, 9½ inches at the nationals last March. "You can stay at home and slug it out," he says, "or you can come here."

Suleiman Nyambui, a 29-year-old UTEP senior and the holder of a record 11 NCAA titles, really doesn't mind living in a typically cramped dorm room, complete with roommate and pale yellow walls, half a world apart from his wife and four children. That is part of the trade-off. Nyambui had grown tired of slugging it out in Tanzania, teaching elementary school and training too hard for too few shots at competition. "People say, 'Ah, Nyambui's coming over here just to run; Nyambui's going to America to compete in the NCAA and after four years of beating those kids, he'll go home,'" says the 1980 Olympic silver medalist at 5,000 meters. "They don't understand where I came from. I came for an education. Running is a hobby. I can't stop running because you say that I'm a foreigner. And you say that only because I'm running good. If I was last, nobody would care."

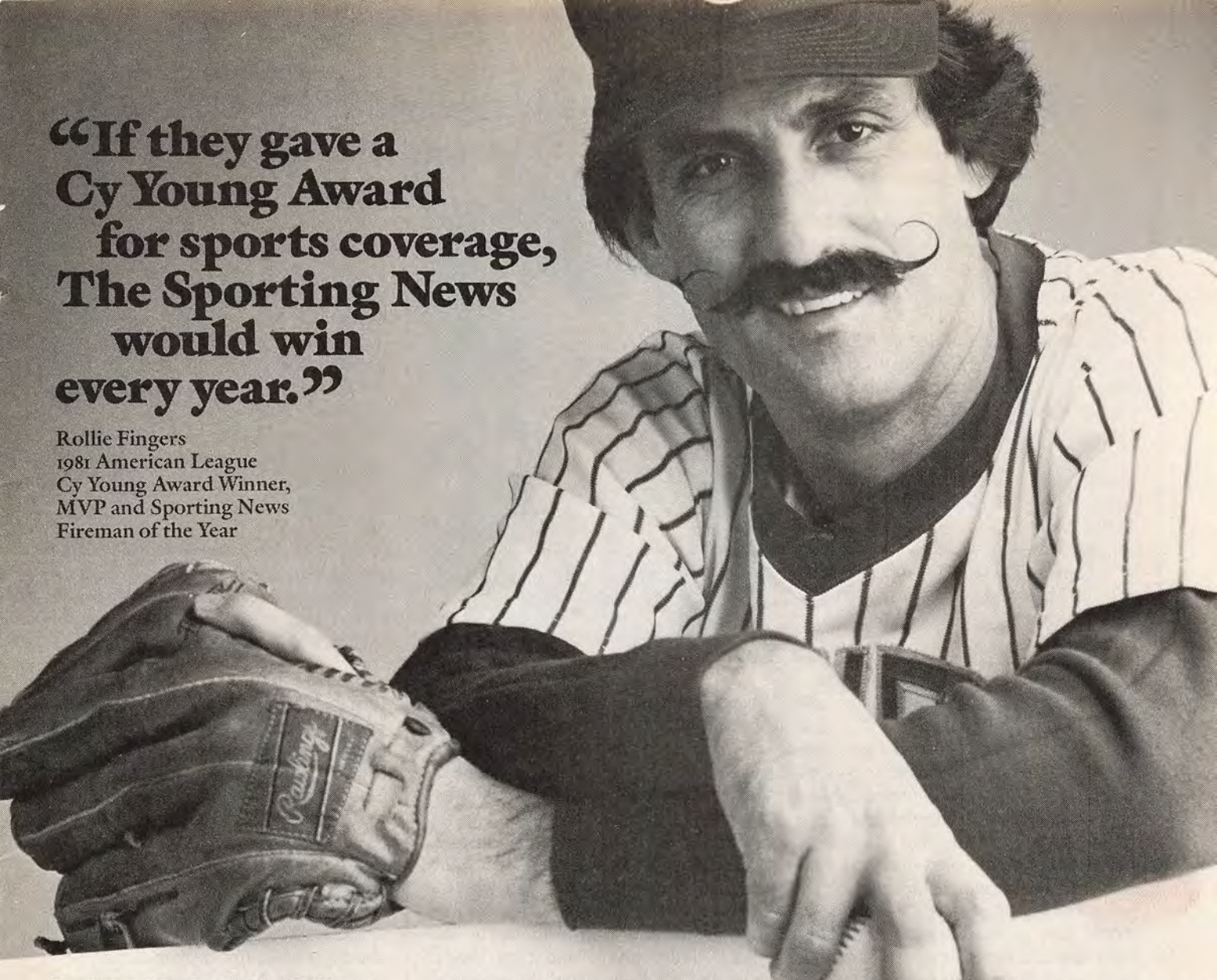
That he's usually first remains one of the stronger arguments for the presence of foreign students. SMU's McLaughlin questions whether Keith Bateson of Rhode Island would have been an all-American hammer thrower without the influence of SMU teammates Richard Olsen and Robert Weir, a pair of foreign athletes who went 1-2 in the NCAAs. And without the experience of chasing a Nyambui or a Henry Rono, would the Craig Virgins and the Alberto Salazars have developed so quickly into world-class runners? "But for every one or two guys that it has made tougher," says Oregon coach Bill Dellinger, who coached Salazar to the world marathon record last October, "it has discouraged a hundred of them to quit the sport."

Cream of the Homegrown Crop

Tom Tellez's recruiting classes at Houston, for the most part, were full of Guys Most Likely to Get Discouraged. "To me," he says, "the enjoyment of coaching is to see someone develop." Loose translation: foreign athletes need not apply. "That's not developmental

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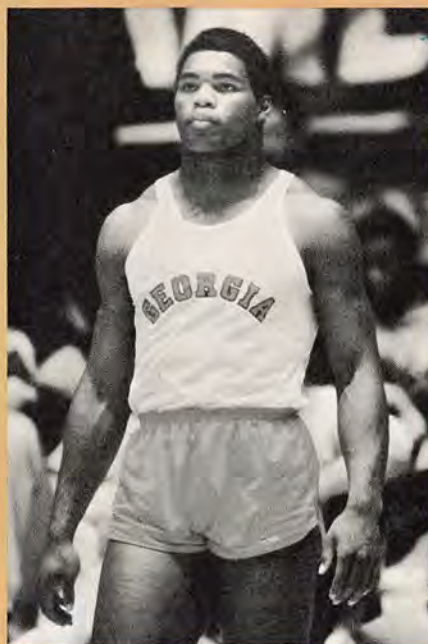
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Walker the Runner: Heisman Trophy or Olympic Gold?

Only one athlete in the history of the world has been all-American in two sports as a freshman. That same athlete has a chance to win both football's Heisman Trophy and an Olympic gold medal. He is Herschel Walker, sprinter and running back for the University of Georgia.

Running track is not just an off-season lark for Walker. "Sometimes I think I prefer track to football," Walker says. "I like the concept of man against man rather than team against team."

Whether it's against a man or a team, Walker seems to prosper. Last July on the European circuit, Walker ran a 10.19 hundred meters, just .19 off the world's record. In addition, he was an outdoor all-American in the 400-meter relay, ran the third leg on a Georgia relay team that finished second nationally in the NCAA's and made it to the final seven in both the



Milrose Games and the Dallas Invitational Track Meet—all rare accomplishments for a freshman.

Herschel Walker's future in track could be as bright as it promises to be in football. "Very few sprinters are as big as Herschel is," says Georgia track coach Louis Gainey, "so you're never sure how fast he'll be able to run. But he'll definitely be more consistent this year, and with the added experience his times should come down."

With time, Walker might even achieve his greatest goal, to compete for the 1984 Olympic team. "I'd rather win an Olympic gold medal than the Heisman Trophy," says Herschel, "but if you mess up in track you have nobody to blame but yourself. You have the ability to control your own destiny." Somehow, on the gridiron or the track, the destiny of Herschel Walker seems secure.

coaching," he says. "It's more like taking a diamond and polishing it."

Even a 14-carat high school gem like Carl Lewis requires a different type of coaching than an older foreign athlete with several years of international experience. It didn't matter that as a schoolboy in Willingboro, New Jersey, Lewis had extended the national scholastic long jump record to 26 feet, 8 inches; he would have to be disassembled and rebuilt like the rest of them. That prospect, as intriguing as it was frightening, enticed Lewis to a school that did not even consider recruiting him until March of his senior year. Although Lewis had used up the six recruiting visits allowed by the NCAA by then and had all but packed his spikes for Tennessee, he was curious enough to pay his own way to Houston for a visit. "A lot of coaches there said, 'Once you get here, we're going to keep doing what works well, and you'll get a little bit older and you'll jump a little bit farther and probably hit 28 feet before you leave,'" he recalls. "Here they said, 'What you're doing is not exactly right, we'll make the corrections and then everything will be a lot easier.'"

Lewis took the gamble. There were times during his freshman year, as he reworked nearly every phase of his technique, that he became frustrated to the point of challenging the theories of Tellez, who is merely the jumps coach for the 1984 Olympic team. But by last year, things were finally falling into

place. Lewis set a world indoor record of 27 feet, 10¼ inches (since bettered by a 28-foot, 1-inch jump this winter) and had a jump of 28 feet, 3½ inches outdoors. "Now," the junior says in a major understatement, "the gamble is paying off."

With an obvious talent like Carl Lewis, a coach is sure to see the dividends of his teachings in a year of two, but with the others you can never be sure. "It may not pay off until they're juniors or seniors," Tellez says, "and then they're gone and you have to start the process all over again. It doesn't make for championship teams. But I'd rather see the development; it's the only reason I'm in track and field."

So, then, what is the bottom line in collegiate sports, to win or to develop? "It's to win," says Tellez the developer. "I don't kid myself," says Banks the winner. "If I went with the best Americans I could get, I wouldn't have much of a program."

A Question of Balance

For Ted McLaughlin there is no need to recruit heavily overseas. He can attract quality athletes to SMU's lush Dallas campus, where the Lucy Ewings cheer their football team on Saturday. McLaughlin is comfortable with a team that is only one-third foreign, almost the mirror image of UTEP; he says he is concerned about the snowball effect of foreign recruiting. "Once you get the contacts and you have kids who are happy here," he says, "they're always in-

forming you of someone else who is back home. Eventually, you'll have to make a choice between a real good U.S. kid and a kid from overseas who might be a little better. You have to be careful; it's hard to say no to something like that."

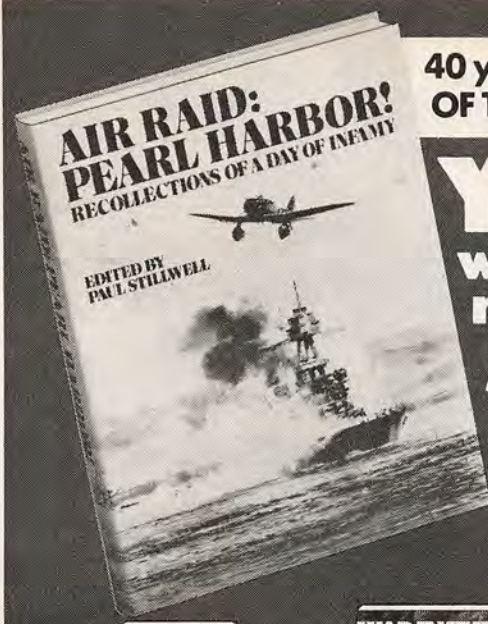
That snowball effect has finally hit Houston—only in this case, it's with Americans. Carl Lewis, of course, got the ball rolling; Stanley Floyd, the world's top-rated sprinter in 1980, came aboard after an unhappy freshman year at Auburn. Now there is Anthony Ketchum, the nation's top high school quarter-miler from nearby Needville, Texas, who found he didn't have to go away to run with two of the world's best sprinters. Lewis, it seems, is also an all-American recruiter. "I've only lost four in three years," he says smiling, "and now everybody wants to come."

Houston now finds itself on the brink of challenging UTEP and SMU for an NCAA title, without the temptation or the need to recruit overseas. But Tellez remains cautious. "If I don't win a national championship it's not the end of the world," he says. "The big thing is to compete, to go up there and really give everybody a run for their money."

And if Houston beats the odds and wins an NCAA title this year?

"It would be nice to do that," Tellez admits. "It certainly would be a novelty." ★

Dave Rosner covers track and field for Long Island's Newsday.



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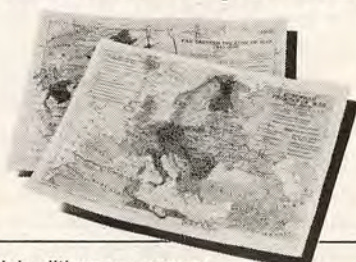
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REJOICE, CHICAGO THE SOX LOOK GOOD

No kidding. A new pair of Sox owners has built a team worth watching. You can bet that the rest of the American League is paying attention.

by Steve Fiffer

It is the fifth day of baseball's winter meetings, in Hollywood, Florida, and Eddie Einhorn and Jerry Reinsdorf, the owners of the Chicago White Sox, are getting antsy. They haven't pulled off a trade yet, and although in the days prior to the meetings they have consummated two of baseball's biggest deals—swapping all-star Chet Lemon for the Tigers' Steve Kemp and wooing batting instructor Charley Lau from the Yankees—they are not satisfied.

Einhorn pushes himself away from the stone crabs at a restaurant down the road from convention headquarters and moves from table to table of baseball people. "Hey, Harry," he calls to Harry Dalton, general manager of the Milwaukee Brewers. "If we can't trade players, let's at least trade baseball cards. Let's do something."

Reinsdorf, still at the Sox table with GM Roland Hemond and field manager Tony LaRussa, settles for a trivia contest. While the guests are trying to remember the names of the Chicago Cubs'

infamous College of Coaches, something finally happens. Hemond is paged. The GM rushes to the phone, then returns to gather Einhorn, Reinsdorf and LaRussa for a hurried trip back to the hotel. It is 11 P.M.

At 9 the next morning, Einhorn wanders into the hotel lobby. There are two clues that something big has materialized: he looks like he hasn't gotten any sleep, and he's wearing a suit. Flanked by Hemond and LaRussa, he announces that the Sox have traded reserve catcher Jim Essian (52 at-bats in 1981), shortstop Todd Cruz (who did not play one inning of major league baseball last year) and minor leaguer Rod Allen to the Seattle Mariners for Tom Paciorek, the American League's second leading hitter in 1981 (.326). Mariner manager Rene Lachemann stands off to the side, looking like a man who has just watched his own pocket get picked. Later, he confesses envy for his former roommate LaRussa, "because Santa Hemond keeps getting him the players."



In '81 the Sox picked up Luzinski's righthanded bat and Fisk's evenhanded leadership. Now they've added Kemp's lefthanded power.

"Santa" Hemond, of course, never leaves home without Messrs. Einhorn and Reinsdorf's line of credit. With it, he has acquired enough talent for the White Sox seriously to challenge for the team's first pennant since 1959.

The New Wave

They have been called the Sunshine Boys, after the old vaudeville act, because of the quiet but wry way Jerry Reinsdorf plays straight man to his flamboyant partner, Eddie Einhorn. But the young owners of the White Sox are anything but old fashioned. Rather, they are the new breed of owner in baseball: the old gentleman sportsman has been replaced by the aggressive profit-seeking entrepreneur.



Changing Sox

In short order, owners Einhorn and Reinsdorf have wrought changes in the lineup. The batting order of the White

Sox on opening day 1980 bears little resemblance to the batting order projected for opening day 1982.

1980

Bob Molinaro, DH
Alan Banister, 3B
Claudell Washington, LF
Lamar Johnson, 1B
Chet Lemon, CF
Harold Baines, RF
Jim Morrison, 2B
Marvis Foley, C
Greg Pryor, SS

1982

Ron LeFlore, CF
Tony Bernazard, 2B
Steve Kemp, LF
Greg Luzinski, DH
Tom Paciorek, 1B
Carlton Fisk, C
Harold Baines, RF
Jim Morrison, 3B
Bill Almon, SS

Reinsdorf and Einhorn are betting their \$20 million purchase price that the application of modern business principles is the only cure for the long-time mediocrity of the White Sox. Bill Veeck, from whom they purchased the team in 1980, operated the club on a shoestring. He will be remembered for his scrappi-

ness and his love of the game, not for winning championships. Einhorn and Reinsdorf have other ideas, and so far those ideas are working. In their first season of ownership, the refashioned Sox challenged for the division title during each half of the split season, finishing only two and a half games out before the

strike, and falling back during the second half only after a horrendous hitting slump left them 9-19 in September. Still, the Sox finished over .500 for the first time since 1977, whetting their new owners' appetites for bigger things in 1982. Vows Einhorn: "There will be no more Septembers."

Mending the Sox

As the current regime celebrates its first anniversary, it is clear that if it doesn't bring the fans their winner, it won't be for lack of trying. The 1981 White Sox had more new faces than Lon Chaney Jr., and the 1982 edition will be fresher still. Trivia expert Reinsdorf would probably be hard pressed to recite the roster of the team that went 70-90 the season before his purchase. More than half of the starters from opening day 1980 are no longer with the club, and of the remainder, only rightfielder Harold Baines is assured of regular playing time. Fully four of the projected starters in 1982 have been acquired by the new



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WHITE SOX

owners. They join two others, center-fielder Ron LeFlore and second baseman Tony Bernazard, who were signed by Veeck shortly before he sold the club.

What kind of players have Einhorn and Reinsdorf added? Speedburners, defensive wizards and pitchers suited to spacious Comiskey Park, right? Wrong. Although the newly rejuvenated farm system will place an emphasis on those qualities, the group acquired through trades and free agency is best described as "good hit, adequate field, little speed." According to Reinsdorf, immediately to have built a team in the image of the Go-Go Sox of 1959 would have been "too major an overhaul." Thus, deals have been made to strengthen specific weaknesses. Kemp provides needed lefthanded punch; Paciorek provides power at first base, which last year produced only one Sox homer.

This approach was successful last season. Greg Luzinski, signed as a free agent to provide sorely needed right-handed power, responded by hitting 21 home runs and leading the Sox in six offensive categories during the shortened season. He was named baseball's Comeback Player of the Year. Catcher Carlton Fisk, also signed as a free agent, was disappointing at the plate during the second half, but he fulfilled his primary role as counsel to the young pitching staff. Bill Almon was the biggest surprise. Ticketed for Triple A ball, he won the job as starting shortstop by default, then batted .301. He finished second to Luzinski for comeback honors.

If the season were to begin as of this writing, the Sox lineup would read: LeFlore CF, Bernazard 2B, Kemp LF, Luzinski DH, Paciorek 1B, Fisk C, Baines RF, Jim Morrison 3B, Almon SS. Einhorn calls the personnel in the three through seven spots the strongest in the league. Add pitchers Britt Burns, Steve Trout, Ross Baumgarten, Richard Dotson and Dennis Lamp, and the owners' confidence that improvement will continue seems well placed.

It had better be, because across town the Cubs have taken up the challenge to bring the novelty of winning baseball to Chicago. The Cubs were sold last summer by the Wrigley family to the Tribune Company, owner of the *Chicago Tribune*, and shortly after the season Dallas Green was brought in from Philadelphia to be executive vice-president and general manager. Green has been a busy man, hiring a new manager, Lee Elia; picking up a catcher and swapping pitchers with his old club, the Phillies; swapping



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WHITE SOX

second-line pitchers with San Francisco and second-line outfielders with Houston; and shopping around Bill Buckner, the Cubs' best player and the leading hitter in the National League in 1980, in hopes of finding a home run hitter for his home run park.

Green's deals have been of less consequence so far than the Sox's, but they've surpassed the Sox's moves in numbers and, more important, in news.

A Decade of Misery

How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to be a baseball fan in Chicago! Here is the sad record since 1973:

	SOX		CUBS	
	Pct.	G.B.	Pct.	G.B.
1973	.475	17	.478	5
1974	.500	9	.407	22
1975	.466	22½	.463	17½
1976	.398	25½	.463	26
1977	.556	12	.500	20
1978	.441	20½	.488	11
1979	.456	14	.494	18
1980	.438	26	.389	27
1981				
A	.585	2½	.288	17½
B	.437	7	.451	6

Classing Them Up

Although Einhorn and Reinsdorf came to baseball via unconventional routes—Eddie made his fortune packaging basketball and other sports events for television; Jerry made his in real estate—there is no doubt that they love the game as much as the O'Malleys, Carpenters and other members of the baseball gentry. Reinsdorf grew up at Ebbets Field, and his office looks like a shrine to the Brooklyn Dodgers. Einhorn saw an average of 30 to 40 games a year before purchasing the Sox, and claims to have been in virtually every major league, minor league and spring training park in the country, and a few out of the country. But when the new owners talk baseball these days they inevitably end up talking marketing, capitalization and "upsides," a favorite term of each. That may seem a cold approach to the summer game, but as Einhorn says, "How can you afford merely to be a fan when you've got such a huge investment?"

Reinsdorf learned that lesson quickly. He had dreamed of owning a major league franchise since high school. But when the Sox became available in 1980, he had to take off his baseball cap and

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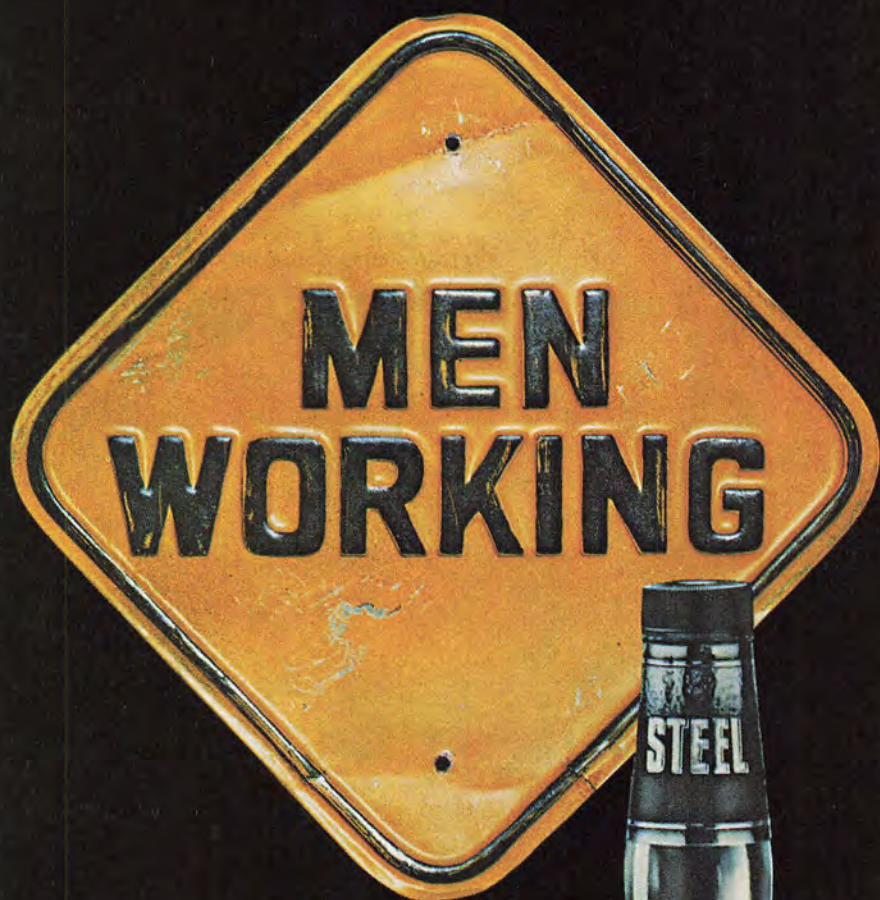
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take out his calculator. If I'm going to commit such a large sum, he asked himself, how can I protect that investment and produce a winner? Talks with marketing and media consultants, like sports and entertainment entrepreneur Jerry Perenchio and Einhorn, who was then executive producer of the CBS "Sports Spectacular," produced a two-word answer: pay television.

Pay television. If free agency was baseball's big idea of the Seventies, pay television is the not unrelated idea of the Eighties. The theory is simple: by extending the stadium and charging fans to watch ballgames in their own living rooms, franchises can generate enough money to meet skyrocketing payrolls, develop farm systems and compete in the free agent market.

An awkward by-product is the perception that ownership disdains the traditional Sox fan and is trying to move, as one fan describes it, "from the blue-collar-man's team to a white-collar team." Subscribers to this theory point to management's remarks about eliminating rowdiness at the ballpark, and to

SPORT QUIZ

Answers from page 78. 1—Frank Selvy (Furman, 1954). 2—c. 3—d. 4.—Chuck Cooper (Boston Celtics). 5—a. 6—c. 7—a. 8—Henry Boucha (Detroit Red Wings, January 28, 1973). 9—b. 10—Bob Nieman (St. Louis Browns, 1951). 11—Dick Hughes (St. Louis) vs. Gary Waslewski (Boston), 1967. 12—b. 13—a-Larry Faulk; b-Gary Cole; c-Bobby Moore; d-Eddie Gregory. 14—c. Answer to last month's Stumper (Name the first 7-footer ever to play professional basketball.) Ralph (Sky) Siewert, 7 feet 1, 230 pounds; 1946-47, St. Louis and Toronto.

PICTURE CREDITS

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WHITE SOX

the fact that every major player they've acquired is white.

Reinsdorf and Einhorn insist that color has nothing to do with their personnel decisions. And they say they have no intention of forgetting the longtime fan; they merely want to broaden the team's appeal. "We want to attract all classes," says Einhorn. "At Yankee Stadium the fans throw bottles from the outfield. At Comiskey Park, they throw them from the box seats. We want to change that. We're not going to adopt the attitude of the fan who said, 'Please don't ruin our Sox by classing them up.' I'm sorry, but we are going to class them up."

'82 Forecast: More Shopping

Of course, on the field certain question marks remain. Despite LeFlore, the overall team speed is not great, and the defense is suspect. The Sox acknowledge sacrificing some defense in giving up the superior fielding Chet Lemon for slow-footed Kemp, and a great loss in replacing gold glove Mike Squires at first with Paciorek, whose home has been the outfield. Essian and Cruz were excellent defensively; their departure will weaken a

thin bench.

The starting pitching, led by all-star Britt Burns, just 22, looks strong, but the Sox are still in the market for an experienced righthander. Finally, manager LaRussa admits the bullpen could use some strengthening. Free agent Ed Farmer will probably not return. Lamar Hoyt had a fine year, and the Sox acquired veterans Lynn McGlothen and Jerry Koosman for last year's stretch run, but an ace would help.

Aware of the club's weaknesses, Einhorn, Reinsdorf and Company are not through trying to improve the lineup. As the second interleague trading period (February 15-April 1) progresses, they will be huddling in their offices at the Sox's spring training camp in Sarasota, Florida. Antsy. Thinking about third base, the bullpen, a righthanded stopper. The condition persists. "We're still in the flesh market," smiles Reinsdorf.

If their track record in other businesses is any guide, the Sunshine Boys will also keep their promise to bring a winner to Chicago. "I've never failed at anything," says Einhorn. "Why should I fail at baseball?" ★

Steve Fiffer is a freelance writer based in Chicago.

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SPORT QUIZ

Come up with the correct answer to the 15th question—The Stumper—and drop it in the mail. In case of a tie, a drawing will determine the three winners. The answer to The Stumper will appear next month; all other answers can be found on page 74. (Note: The pictures shown do not necessarily indicate the correct answers.) Send entries to Sport Quiz, 119 West 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10018, by March 8.

1. Wilt Chamberlain is the only professional basketball player to score 100 points in a game. Who is the only Division I collegian to accomplish that feat?
2. Which of the following teams has never won an NCAA basketball championship?
a. Oregon
b. Oklahoma A&M
c. Duke
d. LaSalle
3. Which player is the all-time NCAA (Division I) career scoring leader (44.2 ppg)?
a. Austin Carr
b. Oscar Robertson
c. Calvin Murphy
d. Pete Maravich
4. Name the first black player ever to sign with an NBA team.
5. Which coach has the *lowest* lifetime

winning percentage (.340)?

- a. Kevin Loughery
- b. Fuzzy Levane
- c. Bob Cousy
- d. Tom Nissalke
6. Which former NBA player holds the record for most field goals attempted in a game (48)?
a. Wilt Chamberlain
b. Elgin Baylor
c. Rick Barry
d. Jerry West
7. Which NHL player holds the mark for the most points scored in one period (6)?
a. Bryan Trottier
b. Guy Lafleur
c. Darryl Sittler
d. Mike Bossy
8. Name the player who scored the fastest opening goal in NHL history (6 seconds).
9. Who holds the record for the most shots on goal in a season (550)?
a. Bobby Hull
b. Phil Esposito
c. Gordie Howe
d. Wayne Gretzky
10. Only one major league baseball player has hit home runs in his first two official at-bats. Identify him.
11. Two rookies, Fernando Valenzuela and Dave Righetti, opposed each other

in the 1981 World Series. When was the last time two rookies both started a series game? Who were the pitchers?

12. Which non-pitcher holds the record for playing the most games in a career without stealing a base?

- a. Tim McCarver
- b. Russ Nixon
- c. Ed Kranepool
- d. Rusty Staub

13. Match these athletes with their former names.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| a. Abdul Salaam | 1. Gary Cole |
| b. Abdul Qadir Jeelani | 2. Eddie Gregory |
| c. Ahmad Rashad | 3. Bobby Moore |
| d. Mustafa Muhammad | 4. Larry Faulk |

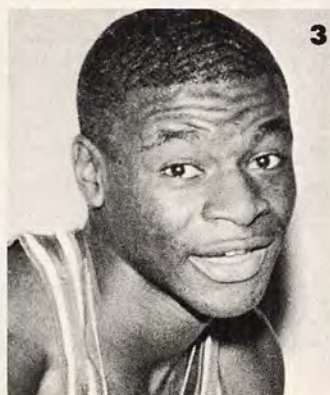
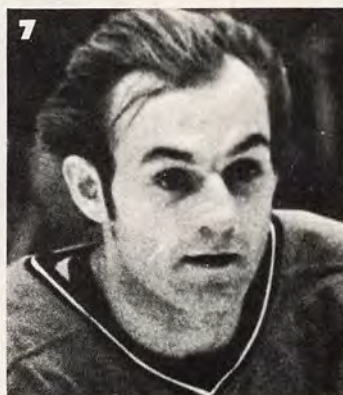
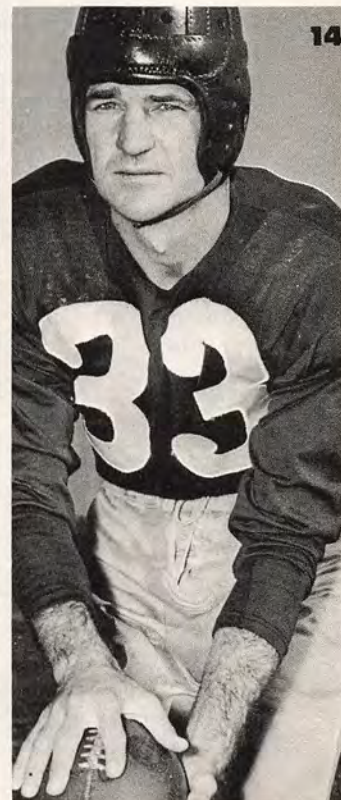
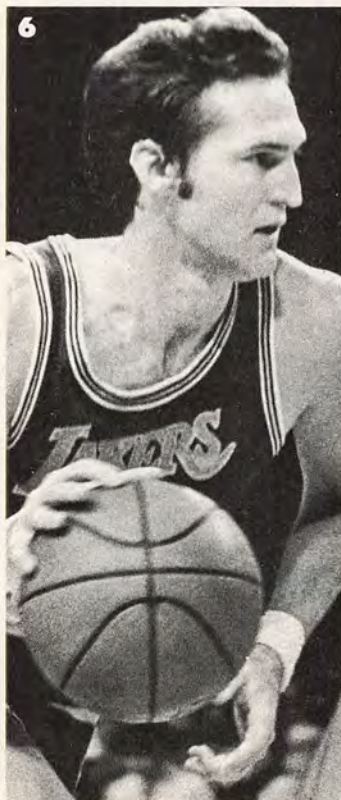
14. Which NFL passer holds the mark for having the fewest passes intercepted in a season (1)?

- a. Bart Starr
- b. Sammy Baugh
- c. Joe Ferguson
- d. Gary Wood

15. The Stumper

Answer this question correctly and win a Sport T-shirt.

What major college basketball team has been to the NCAA Tournament the most times without ever making it to the Final Four?





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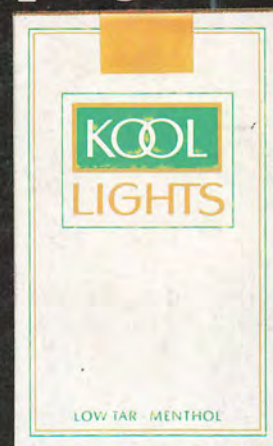
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